CHAPTER IV

OBJECT MARKING AND THEMATIC ROLES
Chapter 4

Object marking and thematic Roles

4.0. Introduction

Objects in AS occur before the verb in the clause structure, which is the normal object position in Indo-Aryan languages (Masica, 1991: 364). Normally, object is associated with the accusative case in a nominative–accusative case system, but apart from the canonical accusative case, the objects also take various non-canonical/differential object markings (Blake 2001, Butt 1993, Mohanan 1994). The differential object markings look into factors like animacy, definiteness and specificity. The object marking in AS also depends upon similar factors.

In AS, objects of transitive constructions can be marked by accusative case and can also receive unmarked nominative case. The criteria of these case features are that, if the object is [+animate], it takes accusative case ke; and if it is [-animate], it takes nominative case (or is not marked for case). The object case will depend upon ‘animacy hierarchy’ (fig 14 in § 2.4.1) where the object higher in animacy takes the accusative case. The definite [+animate] object NPs take accusative and the definite [-animate] object NPs remain unmarked. Again, non-specific or generic [±animate] object is unmarked. The specific object NPs are marked by the accusative case.

Objects acquire three thematic roles in transitive constructions, and they are patient, theme and rheme. However, in ditransitive the objects are theme, recipient or beneficiary. Like subjects, in object case, we see that there is no one to one correspondence between syntactic coding and the thematic roles.

Dowty (1991) states certain proto-patient properties in order to identify the thematic roles of the objects which are earlier discussed in §2.5.2, in Chapter 2. As per the proto-role theory (Dowty 1991), a proto-patient is the one that exhibits the greater number of proto-patient properties like (i) ‘change of state’ which suggests that the object undergoes a change of state as a result of action. It can be both physical and mental. (ii) Incremental theme refers to a property of those objects that
are effected (either created or destroyed) by the action of the verb. (iii) Proto-patient is a causally affected object of the action. (iv) The property of being ‘stationary’ suggest that they are motionless or still relative to the movement of another participant; and (v) the property of ‘dependent existence’ implies that the participant/patient cannot be independent of the action of the verb like the subjects (§3.5. in chapter 3).

This chapter deals with the factors that determine the thematic role of the objects in three different grammatical functions: direct object, indirect object and oblique position. The primary division of the verb into dynamic and stative determines the thematic hierarchy of the objects.

4.1. Transitive construction

The transitive verbs can be primarily divided into dynamic and stative. The object in the direct object of a transitive verb can take an accusative case and also a nominative \(^{17}\) (which is unmarked). The following sub-sections discuss dynamic and stative verbs and their role in the assignment of the thematic role to the object arguments.

4.1.1. Dynamic verbs and their proto-patient properties.

Objects of verb like mar ‘kill’ and ban-aa ‘make’ can have the all the proto-patient properties of incremental theme (created/destroyed), change of state (live/dead), causally affected (killed/built), stationary (motionless) and dependent existence (inseperable from the action). This is illustrated in the following examples.

132. (a) \(\sigma\) sāp-thø ke mar-Ł ak  
3SG.NOM snake-CL.ACC kill-PAST-3SG  
‘He killed the snake.’

\(^{17}\) Many prefer to call it as absolutive because both nominative and absolutive cases do have a marker. However, I shall use the term nominative to refer to this case.
(b) birsi ghar-thɔ ban-aa-l-ak
Birsi.NOM ghar-CL.NOM build-CAUS-PAST-3SG
‘Biri built the house.’

In (132a) the object of verb ‘kill’ undergoes change of state from ‘living’ to ‘dead’. It is effected by the ‘action of killing’. It is causally affected by the action. Moreover, the ‘object killed’ is inseperable from the ‘action of killing’. Similarly, in (132b) the object ghar-thu ‘the house’ is effected or created by the action. It is caused ‘to be built’. It undergoes change of state in the sense of ‘come into being’. It remains stationary and is dependent on the action of ‘being built’.

Object of pit ‘beat’ will have the property of being causally affected, besides, being stationary to and inseperable from the action (133). The verb may not imply definite change of state. However, khɛd-aa ‘chase’ may imply movement on the part of the participant ‘being chased’ and therefore suggests a change of state (134).

133. ɔ chɔri-thɔ ke pit-l-ak
3SG.NOM boy-CL. ACC beat-PAST-3SG
‘He beat the boy.’

134. birsi bilai-thɔ ke khɛd-aa-l-ak
birsi.NOM cat-CL. ACC chase-DC-PAST-3SG
‘Biri chased the cat.’

In (133) and (134), the specific animate NPs chɔri-thɔ ‘the girl’ and bilai-thɔ, respectively, take the accusative case ke. Again, verb aan ‘bring’ and rakh ‘keep’ may have both an animate and inanimate object. The action involves causation, as the objects are caused to ‘be brought’ and are inseperable from the action of ‘being brought’. Movement is involved in the process, and thus suggests a definite change of state.

135. birsi kitap-thu/chawa-thɔ-ke aan-l-ak
birsi.NOM book-CL.NOM/baby-CL.ACC bring-PAST-3SG
‘Biri brought the book/the baby.’
There are certain dynamic verbs like *garia-ek* ‘to scold’, *saməющая-ek* ‘to make someone understand’ and *ridə-aa-ek* ‘to entertain’ that affect the object mentally. Though, the *garia-ek* ‘to scold’ may not always suggest a change of mental state in case of the action of scolding being done in the absence of the object. However, the other two verbs imply that the objects are causally affected in the sense, ‘understood’ and ‘entertained’.

136. *mɔi* ə-ke gari-aa-l-ö/ridə-aa-l-ö
   I.NOM 3SG-ACC scold-DC-PAST-1SG/entertain-DC-PAST-1SG
   ‘I scolded/entertained him/her.’

Certain dynamic verbs like *likh* ‘write’ and *parh* ‘read’, however, take only inanimate direct objects with nominative case. Object of *likh* ‘write’ are effected or created by the action of ‘writing’, besides being stationary and inseparable from the action named by the verb. However, ‘the book’ is not an effected object of the action of ‘reading’. The object *cithi-thʊ* ‘the letter’ of the verb *likh* ‘write’ is causally affected in the sense ‘being written’.

137. *mɔi* ḳiṭab-thʊ parh-l-ö
   I.NOM book-CL.NOM read-PAST-1SG
   ‘I read the book.’

138. *mɔi* cithi-thʊ likh-l-ö
   I.NOM letter.NOM write-PAST-1SG
   ‘I wrote the letter.’

In (137-138), both specific and non-specific inanimate NPs *kiṭab-thʊ* ‘the book’ and *cithi-thʊ* ‘the letter’, respectively, take the nominative case.

4.1.1.1. Dynamic mental verbs

Another category comprising compound and conjunct verbs like *pasənd kar* ‘like do’ *bhal pa* ‘like’ and *yaad kar* ‘remember’ are the mental verbs. Unlike those of
the dynamic physical verbs, the objects of these verbs are less prototypical. This is illustrated in (139-140).

139. mɔi  bilai/  ṣ-ke  bhal  pa-ō-na
   I.nom  cat.nom/3SG-ACC  good  get-1sg-pres imperf
   ‘I like cats/ him.’

140. mɔi  ṣ-ke  yaad  kar–ō-na
   I.NOM  3SG-ACC  remember  do-1SG-IMPERF
   Lit: ‘I remember him.’

In (139-140), the accusative marked direct object ṣ-ke ‘3SG-ACC’ of the verbs yaad kar ‘remember do’ and bhal pa ‘like do’ is in the accusative case. However, they have two of the proto-patient properties namely ‘being stationary’ and ‘being inseperable’ from the action named by the verb.

4.1.1.2. Perception verbs

Perception verbs are basically related to notions like ‘sight’, ‘smell’, ‘see’, etc. The verb dekh ‘see’ can have two interpretation, viz, volitional and non-volitional. The definite object in both the volitional and non-volitional implications can occur with nominative case. The occurance of accusative marker suggests specifity of the object.

141. mɔi  chōri –thɔ/ke  dekh-l–ō  [volitional/non-volitional]
   I.NOM  girl-CL/ACC  see- PAST-1SG
   ‘I saw the girl.’

In (141), chōri–thɔ is the direct object of the perception verb dekh ‘see’ and takes the nominative and accusative case ke.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that the objects of dynamic verbs that are physically affected have the greater number of proto-properties, followed by the mentally affected ones. They have the thematic role of patient. The objects of dynamic mental verbs and perception verbs do not posses the proto-
patient property of ‘being causally affected’ thus, can be considered as the theme.
The table 13 shows the proto-properties of a list of dynamic, mental and perception verbs in AS.

### Table 13 The dynamic verbs and the proto-patient properties of the object

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Object case</th>
<th>Change of state</th>
<th>Incremental theme</th>
<th>Causally affected</th>
<th>Stationary</th>
<th>No Independent existence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ban-aa</td>
<td>nom</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maar ‘kill’</td>
<td>Acc</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pit</td>
<td>Acc</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kshed</td>
<td>Acc</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aan</td>
<td>Acc/Nom</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parh</td>
<td>Nom</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>likh</td>
<td>Nom</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gari-aa-</td>
<td>Acc</td>
<td>±MENTAL</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ridhi-aa</td>
<td>Acc</td>
<td>MENTAL</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhal pa</td>
<td>Acc/Nom</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yaad kar</td>
<td>Acc/Nom</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dekh</td>
<td>Acc/Nom</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.1.1.3. Test of objecthood of dynamic verbs

An argument in the object position exhibits certain syntactic properties. Therefore, tests of objecthood namely, gapping and passivisation have been conducted. Investigation shows that objects of the dynamic verbs, in AS, undergo gapping and passivisation test.

#### 4.1.1.3.1. Gapping

The object of the main clause co-refers to that of the co-ordinate clause hence can be dropped. Thus, the object of the main clause and that of the gapped position in the co-ordinate clause are co-indexed. The objects of dynamic verbs can be normally control the gapped position. Following examples illustrates the test of gapping of objects of dynamic mental verbs and verbs of perception.
142.(a) mɔi ər-kei, yaad kar-l−ð əsər ər ˈghar-ɛ əw-ɛk
I.NOM 3SG-ACC remember do-PAST-1SG and home-LOC come-NF

bol-l−ð

tell-PAST-1SG

‘I remembered him and asked him to come home.’

(b) mɔi ər-kei garia-l−ð əsər ˈhər ˈbhedə
I.NOM 3SG-ACC scold-PAST-1SG and home send
de-l−ð
give-PAST-1SG

‘I scolded him and sent him home.’

In (142a-b), the accusative object ər-ke ‘3SG-ACC’ of the co-ordinate clause are identical by virtue of which one is dropped. The object ər-ke and the gapped position are co-indexed by a superscript (i).

4.1.1.3.2. Passivisation

Objects can be passivized and promoted to subject position. However, they retain their thematic roles of the basic active constructions (discussed in detail §5.3. in chapter 5).

143.(a) ər-ke ˈaṅdə ˈyaad kar-al hɔ-l-ɛk
3SG-ACC today remember do-PPL happen-PAST-3SG

Lit: ‘He has been remembered today.’

(b) ər-ke ˈaṅdə gari de-wal hɔ-l-ɛk
3SG-ACC today scolding give-PPL happen-PAST-3SG

Lit: ‘He has been scolded today.’

In both (143a-b), the derived passive subject ər-ke ‘3SG-ACC’ retains the accusative case ke which is suffixed to the pronoun ər ‘3SG’. In passivisation, the verbs garia-ek ‘to scold’ takes the light verb gari de ‘scold give’ which is not required in the active sentence.
4.1.2. Stative verbs and the proto-patient property

Stative verbs basically express states of affairs, rather than actions. AS stative verbs can also take object arguments. The objects of stative verbs like ‘know’ ‘understand’ have the accusative markers, but their properties vary from that of the dynamic verbs. As a result, the thematic roles of these arguments differ.

144. ə-ke  dʒan– ə-na
    I.NOM 3SG-ACC  know-1SG-IMPERF
   ‘I know him.’

145. ə  mo-ke  bʊʤh-ə-la
    3SG.NOM I-ACC  understand-3SG-IMPERF
   ‘He understands me.’

In (144-145), the objects of the stative verbs dʒan ‘know’ and bʊʤh ‘understand’ take accusative case but do not have the proto-patient thematic role. As per Dowty’s proto-patient properties, it is observed that they do not undergo change of state. The objects of these stative verbs cannot be considered as incremental theme as they are neither effected nor destroyed by the event named. Rather, they can be considered as partially incremental theme, where we can add an atelic entity to the predicate by adding a postpositional phrase car saal se ‘for four years’.

146. ə-ke  car  saal  ə  dʒan– ə-na
    I.NOM 3SG-ACC  four  year ABL  know-1SG-IMPERF
   ‘I know him for four years.’

In (146), the object ə-ke can be seen undergoing the process of ‘being known’. Therefore, it can be considered as a patientlike argument. Such objects, however, fulfill Dowty’s proto-patient properties of ‘no independent existence’. These objects cannot exist independent of the event of ‘knowing’ and ‘understanding’. However, these arguments lack a very important proto-patient property of ‘being
causally affected’ by the action of ‘knowing’ and ‘understanding’. Thus, these arguments can be considered to be in the thematic role of theme. The inanimate object with similar stative verb will have the theme role and receives the nominative case (147).

147. 

mɔi  baaʧ-thɔ  dʒan–  ə-na
I.NOM  matter-CL  know-1SG-IMPERF

‘I know the matter.’

In the copula constructions, verbs like hek-, lag– and ah– are essentially stative in nature. Even though, they are different from the stative verbs like ‘know’. The reason is that the stative verb ‘know’ requires an agent or an agentlike role in the subject position and a theme in the object position. On the other hand, in copular constructions the relationship between a subject and an object is understood in terms of equative, attributive and locatives. In such case, we cannot consider the NP in the object position of a copula to be a theme just like the stative verb dʒan ‘know’. It becomes important to assign a thematic role to each of the arguments in the subject and object position. Thus, the argument in the subject position is the theme, in the sense that it is ‘what is talked about’ and the argument in the object position is that of a rheme, in the sense ‘what is predicated of’.

148. 

mɔi  mastɔr  hek–  ə/lag– ə
1SG.NOM  teacher  COP.PRES-1SG

‘I am a teacher.’

149. 

mɔi  ghar-e/me  ah– ə
I.NOM  house-LOC/POSP  COP.PRES-3SG

‘I am at home’

150. 

bɪɾsi  sɔndɔr  hek-e/ ah– ə
bɪɾsi.NOM  beautiful  COP.PRES-3SG

‘Birsi is beautiful.’
The arguments in the direct object position of these verbs have the thematic roles of rhemes. These arguments normally do not undergo change of state and are not causally affected. Nevertheless, they entail one of the proto-patient properties, i.e., they are never independent of the event of ‘being’ in the constructions (148-150).

Table 14 illustrates that objects of stative verbs ‘know’ and ‘understand’ have only two of the proto-patient properties, namely ‘dependent existence’. Objects of stative verbs do not have properties like ‘change of state’, ‘incremental theme’ and ‘causally affectedness’. The objects of copula hēk– meet only one criterion of proto-patient, that is, they are stationary.

Table 14 The stative verbs and the properties of their objects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>object case</th>
<th>Proto-patient Properties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Know</td>
<td>Acc/nom</td>
<td>Change of state Incremental theme Causally affected No Independent existence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand</td>
<td>Acc/nom</td>
<td>NO NO NO YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hēk/ah/lag ‘copula’</td>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>NO NO NO NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.2.1. Test of objecthood of direct object of stative verbs

In this section, I have discussed the syntactic properties of the objects of the stative verbs. I have carried out similar tests of gapping and passivisation for the stative verbs that were conducted for the dynamics in § 4.1.1.3. Analysis shows that objects of the stative verbs undergo gapping (151) and passivisation test (152).

151. mōi ə-ke,
dʒain rah– d ār , cin
I.NOM 3SG-ACC know.CP COP.PAST-1SG and recognize
rah– d
COP.PAST-1SG
‘I knew him and recognized.’
The objects of the stative verb ‘know’ and ‘recognize’ (151) undergo gapping. That is, the object ʊ-ke ‘3SG-ACC’ of the main clause is identical with that of the coordinate clause, by virtue of which it can be dropped or gapped. The gapped position and the object ʊ-ke ‘3SG-ACC’ have the same indexation (i).

152. ʊ-ke cin-a/ʤan-a ge-l-ak
3SG-ACC know-NF go-PAST-3SG
‘Lit: He was recognized’

In (152), the object of the stative verb takes accusative case –ke and occurs as a passive subject. Thus, it fulfills the syntactic criteria of being the direct object of the verb.

4.1.3. Thematic hierarchy of direct objects

Dowty’s proto-patient properties do not discriminate between an animate and an inanimate object in terms of patienthood. The case marking do not correspond to the thematic roles of the objects. Rather, the aspecual properties of the verb determine the thematic roles. The discussion on the direct objects in AS and their proto-properties bring forths the thematic hierarchy, where patient roles are assigned to the objects of the dynamic verbs having the greater number of the proto-patient properties. The objects of the mental verbs and those of perception verbs are in theme role. They follow the proto-patient in the thematic hierarchy. The objects of copular verbs are the rhemes, because unlike the theme, they do not possess any of the proto-patient properties. Thus, the prototypical patients are more affected than the non–prototypical. The thematic hierarchy of the patient, theme, and rheme roles of the nominative objects is shown in figure 28.
Degree of affectedness of the nominative objects
patient > theme > rheme

More patientlike

Dynamic (physical affect) > dynamic (mental affect) > mental/perception
> stative > copula

Figure 28 Degree of affectedness of the nominative objects in AS

The accusative marked object arguments with mental, perception and stative verbs are not causally affected like the proto-patients. Seen from this perspective, even the objects with accusative case ke can be arranged in a hierarchy based on the degree of affectedness. In AS, the degree of affectedness of the accusative objects can be shown as a continuum between dynamic and stative verbs in figure 29.

Degree of affectedness of accusative objects
patient > theme

More patientlike

Dynamic (physical affect) > dynamic (mental affect) > mental/perception > stative

Figure 29 Degree of affectedness of accusative objects

In figure 29, the dynamic action verbs that physically affect the arguments are considered to be the proto-typical patients. This is followed by arguments that are mentally affected, as that of ‘scold’ and ‘remember’ and by perception verbs like ‘see’. Finally, the objects of stative verbs like ḍjan ‘know’ and copula hek-, ah-, and lag- are placed next to them.

4.2. Transitivised intransitive predicates

Transitivity is an important property of patient hood. However, certain intransitive verbs take an obligatory NP in the direct object position, which is perfectly grammatical. They are core argument (not adjuncts) relations such as ‘of’, ‘with’
and ‘on’. Nevertheless, such arguments in the direct object positions do not necessarily have the proto-typical patient role.

In AS, postpositions like se, sange, opr can act as case markers to express these arguments. Non canonical object markings that occur with certain dynamic verbs are spatial expressions and are termed as path arguments or more generally as source and goal. These dynamic transitivised verbs can be divided into two subclasses: affected and unaffected.

4.2.1. Locative opr

The object NP with the postposition opr ‘on’ indicates locative case. This postposition may refer to both concrete and abstract locations. For instance, the object kitap-thos ‘the book’ is a concrete entity and is located in a concrete place tebil ker opr ‘on the table’. Again, the object argument with locative postposition upr may refer to location of an abstract attribute like biswas ‘trust’ (153a-b). Such object arguments are referred to as abstract location. It is interesting to note that even such locative arguments can be seen from the perspective of affectedness. The affectedness of these arguments is determined by a dynamic verb, whereas, those with stative verbs remains unaffected.

153.(a)mɔ-r ɔ-ker opr biswas ahe
   I-GEN 3SG-GEN LOC faith have.PRES
   ‘I have lots of faith in him.’

   (b) mɔi ɔ-ker opr biswas kar-qt h-ð
      I.NOM 3SG-GEN LOC trust do-PROG COP-1SG
      Lit: ‘I am trusting a lot on him.’
      ‘I trust him a lot.’

   In (153a), the direct object of the stative verb biswas ahe ‘trust have’ with the position –ker opr appears as unaffected argument. On the other hand, the dynamic forms of the verb biswas kar ‘trusts do’ (153b) can be considered as relatively
affected in comparison to the former. The reason behind this is that, the degree of affectedness of the object is reciprocal to the degree of agentivity of the subject. In other words, a more agentive subject has a more affected object and vice versa. For instance, in example (153a), the subject of the stative verb takes the genitive case and is less agentive than the nominative subject of the dynamic verb (153b). In the same manner, the object in (153b) is more patientlike than the one in (153a), since, the former undergoes the process of ‘being trusted by someone’, rather than ‘being a location’, as in case of the latter.

4.2.2. Ablative se

Ablative case is associated with motion away from a source. It generally indicates removal (from somewhere). In AS, this case is marked by the postposition se. The primary usage of ablative is to mark the location from which an object/person starts its motion. The object includes both physical and abstract. The ablative case marker se can also indicate abstract property of an individual like mon se ‘from heart’. The abstract source can be seen in case of psych verb like dar ‘fear’ (154a). The example of concrete source is given in example (154b).

154. (a) moi ð-ver se dar-at h-ð
   i. NOM 3SG-GEN ABL fear-PROG AUX.PRES-1SG
   ‘I am scared of him’

(b) phal-thʊ gach-thʊ se gir-l-ak
   fruit-CL tree-CL ABL fall-PAST-3SG
   ‘The fruit fell from the tree.’

In AS, the direct objects of ablative se and locative –ɛ imply temporal location, as illustrated in (155a) and (155b), respectively.

155. (a) ð phadʒir-ɛ se kand-ɑt hɛ
   3SG.NOM morning-LOC ABL cry-PROG COP.PRES-3SG
   Lit: ‘She has been crying since morning.’
(b) miting   car  badʒ-ɛ   ahe

meeting   four   time-LOC   EXIST.PRES

‘The meeting is at 4 o’clock.’

In (155a), phadʒire se ‘since morning’ is atelic or durative. In (155b), car badʒe ‘at 4 o’clock’ is telic or non-durative, as it suggests a temporal endpoint.

4.2.3. Associative saʒe

Associative case refers to the relationship of the NP in the object position with that of the NP in the subject position. In AS, the object also receives associative case, marked by the postposition saʒe. The postposition saʒe may take the genitive –r/-ker as its base.

156.(a) birsi   sīta-r   saʒe   ah–ɛ

birsı.NOM   sita-GEN   ASSO   EXIST.PRES-3SG

‘Birsi is with Sita.’

(b) birsi   sīta-r   saʒe   gosithia-aŋ   rah–ɛ

birsı.NOM   sita-GEN   ASSO   talk-PROG   COP.PAST-3SG

Lit: ‘Birsi was talking to Sita.’

In (156a), the associative objects occurring with stative verb ah–ɛ remains unaffected by the action. On the other hand, in (156b) the associative object with dynamic verb gosithia-aŋ ‘talk-PROG’ is affected, in the sense that sīta ‘sita’ is the listener or the participant in ‘the act of conversing’ suggested by the verb.

4.2.4. Test of objecthood of non-canonical objects

The tests of gapping and passivisation are carried out for the non-canonical or transitivised objects in order to establish the syntactic properties of objecthood.
4.2.4.1. Gapping

In AS, objects with ablative se do not undergo gapping (157a-b). Likewise, the objects marked by associative satɛ with stative implication cannot be gapped. However, object with associative case satɛ can be gapped as is evident from example (157c). Again, objects with and temporal ablation se can be gapped (157d), while, object with locative case -ɛ cannot undergo gapping as is evident from example (157e). The possible reason is that the former is atelic in nature and the latter is telic.

157.(a)* moĩ œ-kɛr se i, dar-at h-ô aur _i chup-at
   i.NOM 3SG-GEN ABL fear-PROGAUX.PRES-1SG and hide-PROG
   h-ô
   AUX.PRES-1SG

(b) phal-thu gach se i, gir-l-ak aur _i kharap ho-ɛ
   fruit-CL tree-CL ABL fall-PAST-3SG and spoil happen-PERF
   ge-l-ak
   go-PAST-3SG
   Lit: ‘The fruit fell from the tree and got spoiled’

(c) moĩ sîta-r satɛ i gothi-aa-ɛ rah-ô aœr _i kam
   I.NOM sîta–GEN ASSO talk-DC-PERF COP.PAST-1SG and work
   koir rah–ô
   do.CP COP.PAST-1SG
   ‘I was talking to Sita and was working with her.’
d) \( \sigma \) phadşir-\( \varepsilon \) se\( _i \) kand-\( \alpha t \) h-\( \varepsilon \) aör-\( _i \) cin\( \ddot{\iota}a \)

3SG.NOM morning-LOC ABL cry-PROG COP.PRES-3SG and worry

kar-\( \alpha t \) h-\( \varepsilon \)
do-PROG COP.PRES-3SG

‘Lit: She is crying and worrying since morning.’

(e) *minting car badş-\( \varepsilon i \) ah-\( \varepsilon \) aör-\( _i \) khel bhi

meeting four time-LOC COP.PRES-3SG and match also

ah-\( \varepsilon \)
COP-PRES

‘The meeting is at 4 o’clock and so also is the match.’

From the above test of objecthood of non-canonical objects in AS, it is observed that non-canonical objects occurring with dynamic verbs can be gapped or dropped in the co-ordinate clause. However, those occurring with stative verb like the copula ah-\( \varepsilon \) do not undergo the test of gapping.

4.2.4.2. Passivisation

In AS, it is seen that the ablative objects normally cannot be passivised. The locative object \( \sigma-ker \) \( \varepsilon pre \) of the dynamic verb, biswas kar undergoes passivisation and retains the locative case of the basic active sentence as in (158a). While, those of the stative verbs in (158b-c) normally do not undergo passivisation.

158.(a)\( \sigma-ker \) \( \varepsilon pre \) dher biswas kar-al h\( \varnothing \)-l-\( \ddot{a}k \)

3SG-GEN LOC much trust do-PPL happen.PAST-3SG

Lit: ‘On him much trust has been done.’

(b) *\( \sigma-ker \) \( \varepsilon pre \) dher biswas ah-\( \varnothing \)l al h\( \varnothing \)-l-\( \ddot{a}k \)

3SG-GEN LOC much trust COP-PPL happen.PAST-3SG

(c) *sita-r sange g\( \ddot{a}n \)hi-al ge-l-\( \ddot{a}k \)
sita-GEN ASSO talk-PPL COP.PAST-3SG
The oblique object ʊ-ker ʊpre ‘3SG-GEN LOC’ of the dynamic verb *biswas kar ‘trust do’ with locative –ker ʊpre in (158a) can be passivized, but that of stative verb *biswas ahe ‘trust have’ in (158b) yields a grammatically incorrect construction. The other non-canonical objects marked by the se, sàpɛ,-ɛ, shown in bold in (158c) do not undergo passivisation, even though they occur at direct object position. The same is true for the temporal ablation and location (159a-b). Thus, the tests of syntactic objecthood illustrate that, unlike the canonical objects the non-canonical objects normally do not undergo passivisation, and hence, cannot be considered as the syntactic direct objects of the verb.

4.3. Thematic roles and hierarchy of non-canonical object in AS

Analysis of the various non-canonical object marking in AS shows that these arguments are not affected by the action named by the verb like the proto-patient. These object cases are seen to occur with both stative and dynamic verbs. The nature of the verb manipulates the semantics of these object arguments. The non-canonical or oblique objects with locative ʊpre and ablative se indicate abstract location and ablation. The abstract locative object with dynamic mental verb *biswas kar ‘trust do’ in (158b) can be seen causally affected.

The non-canonical objects with se in (155a) and –ɛ in (155b) indicate temporal ablation and temporal location, respectively. The former has the atelic aspect and refers to the duration of the action, while, the latter implies telic property of the temporal location.

According to Dowty (1991), the proto-roles and their argument selection principles determine hierarchies of traditional roles where agent outranks for
subject and proto-patient outranks obliques for direct object. [Dowty 1991:578 example 37]

Causing event>caused event
Moving argument>source, goal, agr

**Figure 30** The hierarchy of traditional roles proposed by Dowty (1991)

Similarly, in AS the patient outranks the non-canonical or oblique objects. Among the oblique objects, those occurring with the causing event denoted by the dynamic or atelic verbs are higher than those of the caused event denoted by telic or stative verb. Table 15 illustrates the oblique objects and the proto-patient entailments of the verb that assign these objects cases.

In Table 15, the oblique objects of dynamic verb *biswas kar* ‘trust do’ and *guthi-a-e rah-‘ talking/chatting’ have more proto-patient properties compared to oblique objects with stative verb *biswas ahe* ‘trust have’ and copula *ah-*.  

**Table 15** The Oblique object and their proto-patient properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Oblique objects case</th>
<th>Proto-Patient Properties</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>biswas kar</em></td>
<td>Locative</td>
<td>Change of state</td>
<td>Incremental theme</td>
<td>Causally affected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>biswas ahe</em></td>
<td>Locative</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*guthi-a-e rah-</td>
<td>Associative</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*ah-</td>
<td>Associative</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The hierarchy of the thematic roles of oblique object case, in AS, can be shown as in figure 31.
patient > theme > source > goal > location > time

Acc/Nom Oblique case ($se$, $\varepsilon$p$re$, $saye$, $-\varepsilon$)

Affected

More affected Less affected
(dynamic) (stative)

Figure 31 Thematic hierarchy of Oblique object case, in AS.

In figure 31, the oblique objects are lower than patient in the hierarchy of affectedness. The oblique objects assume the thematic role of source, goal, location and time. Thus, unlike the direct objects they are independent of the action named by the verb but are related with the verb in various ways. The argument in this position can be both animate and inanimate. The animate oblique objects show the degree of affectedness as a continuum between more affected and less affected, depending upon the nature of the verb.

4.4. Ditransitive constructions

A ditransitive construction is defined as ‘a construction consisting of a verb, an agent argument, a recipient-like argument, and a theme argument’ (Comrie, Malchukov, Haspelmath, 2007:2). In such constructions, theme and recipient/beneficiary roles come under object positions.

In ditransitive constructions, the indirect object with recipient role is marked different from the direct object with the role of theme. The former takes the dative case marker $ke$ and the latter takes the nominative as is evident from example (161-163).

160. birsi $mo-ke$ $kijap/kijap-tho$ $de-l-ak$
   birsi.NOM  I-DAT       book/book-CL.NOM  give-PAST-3SG

   ‘Birsi gave me book(s)/the book.’
161. ʊ mɔ-κε ɪ'vel-θʊ de-l-ak
3SG.NOM I-DAT cat/-CL-NOM give-PAST-3SG

‘He gave me cat(s)/the cat.’

162. mɔi bɪrśi ke ɪ'vɔrī/-θʊs/ɛk-θʊs ɛk'vɔiri de-l- ʊ
1SG.NOM birsi DAT girl/-CL/NUM-CL girl.NOM give-PAST-1SG

Lit: ‘I gave Birsi girl(s)/the girl/a girl.’

‘I provided a/the girl or girl(s) to work as maid for Birsi.’

In ditransitive constructions (161-163), the direct objects, both the animate and inanimate, take nominative case with that thematic role of theme. The direct object remains unmarked (ø) and has nothing to do with specificity and non-specificity.

The indirect object, as in (161-163), usually precedes the direct object in a ditransitive construction, that is, it follows the IO-DO word order. The indirect object is normally the goal or the recipient, and, therefore, it receives the dative case marker –κेहृ. The ditransitive predicate de ‘give’ marks the animate indirect object with dative –κेहृ with the thematic role of a recipient.

4.4.1. Recipient vs beneficiary thematic roles of indirect objects

The most typical ditransitive constructions contain a verb of physical transfer such as ‘give’, ‘lend’, ‘hand’, ‘sell’, ‘return’, describing a scene in which an agent participant causes an object to pass into the possession of an animate receiver (recipient). However, some verb denoting mental transfer such as ‘show’ or ‘tell’ behaves in a very similar way (Comrie, Malchukov, Haspelmath, 2007). Though such arguments are not like typical recipients, they still termed them as recipient-arguments. They further distinguished between a benefactive construction and a ditransitive construction. The former consist of a benefactive situation (163a) and the latter involves a transfer situation as in example (163b).

18The dative case marker is homophonous with the accusative case marker –κेहृ in the language. But they differ in the thematic roles therefore considered as different (Mohanan 1994).
163. (a) She brought coffee to me/ for me
   (b) She bought me a coffee

According to Comrie, et al. (2007) the fundamental difference between a ditransitive and benefactive is that, beneficiaries may also occur with intransitives verbs as in example (164).

164. She sang for me

In AS, the dative indirect objects can possess the thematic role of either recipient or beneficiary. Thus, arguments in a ditransitive can be that of an agent, recipient, and theme. The ditransitive construction can denote both physical transfer and mental transfer. The presence of beneficiary in ditransitive constructions requires the use of postpositions khatir or lagi followed by a genitive base -r/-ker.

Consider the following constructions with the ditransitive verb bhedʒ ‘sent’.

165. (a) mɔi Ṽ -ke poisa bhedʒ-aa-l–ő
   I. NOM 3SG-DAT money send-DC-PAST-1SG
   ‘I sent him money.’

   (b) mɔi Ṽ -ke khaṭir poisa bhedʒ-aa-l–ő
   I. NOM 3SG-GEN POSP money send-DC-PAST-1SG
   ‘I sent money for him.’

In (165a) the indirect object is a recipient and in (165b) the indirect object is the beneficiary. Both imply physical transfer of the entity poisa ‘money’. In AS, the ditransitive construction can also denote mental transfer with bol ‘tell’ (166a-b).

166. (a) mɔi Ṽ-ke baaṭ-thɔ bol-l–ő
   I. NOM 3SG-DAT matter-CL tell-PAST-1SG
   ‘I told him the matter.’

   (b) mɔi Ṽ-ker khaṭir baaṭ-thɔ bol-l–ő
   I. NOM 3SG-GEN POSP matter-CL tell-PAST-1SG
   Lit: ‘I told the matter for him.’
In (166a), the indirect object with dative/accusative ṣ-ke ‘him’ is the recipient whereas, in (166b), the indirect object is a beneficiary. The difference in the meaning of these two constructions, with the use of different case markers, clearly shows that the recipient is likely to be more affected than the beneficiary argument.

Moreover, Comrie, et al (2007:3) has pointed out the key difference between a ditransitive and a benefactive construction. According to them, a beneficiary can be possible in case of intransitive verbs, not a recipient. In AS, similar distinction can be observed.

167. mɔi *ṣ-ke/ ṣ-ker khaṭir kand-l–ō
   I.NOM *3SG-DAT/3SG-GEN POSP cry-PAST-L-1SG
   ‘I cried for him.’

In the intransitive construction (167), the indirect object with the thematic role of a recipient is ungrammatical. On the other hand, the beneficiary ṣ-ker khaṭir is possible with the intransitive verb kand ‘cry’.

The gist of the above discussion is that the difference in the thematic role of the recipient and beneficiary depends on whether the indirect object is affected by the action or not. The NP with the thematic role of the recipient is an affected argument whereas, the beneficiary is a non-affected argument. This leads us to conclude that even indirect objects can be arranged in a hierarchy of affected arguments (discussed in detail in § 4.4.3).

4.4.2. Passivisation tests

In AS, the indirect object with the recipient and beneficiary role can be passivised. The recipient retains the dative case marker ke.

168. mo-ke kihat /kihat-tho de-wal ge-1-ek
   I-DAT book/ book-CL.NOM give-PPL go-PAST-3SG
   Lit: ‘To me a/the book was given.’

In (169), the derived passive subject is the beneficiary of the verb de ‘give’, and concrete direct object kihat ‘book’ is the theme.
169. ṣ -ker kʰaṭir kɨtɒp-thɔ de-wal ge-l-ɛk
3SG-GEN POSP book-CL.NOM give-PPL go-PAST-3SG

Lit: ‘For him the book was given.’

In (169), the derived passive subject ṣ ‘3SG’ retains the dative case –ker kʰaṭir and the thematic role of beneficiary of the verb.

4.4.3. Thematic hierarchy of double objects

According to Dowty (1991: 576), ‘With a three-place predicate, the non-subject argument having the greater number of entailed proto-patient properties will be lexicalized as the direct object, and the non-subject argument having fewer entailed proto-patient properties will be lexicalized as an oblique or prepositional object (and if two non-subject arguments having approximately equal numbers of entailed proto-patient properties, either or both may be lexicalized as direct object).’

As per Dowty’s proto-role theory, the direct object in AS normally takes the theme role. Theme has more proto-patient property than the indirect object, first, by virtue of being the direct object of the predicate. Second, the theme undergoes change of position or ‘physical transfer’ with ditransitive verbs de ‘gives’, bhedį ‘send’ and so on. This justifies why direct object is placed above indirect object in the hierarchy of the grammatical functions (see figure 13 in § 2.4.1, Chapter 2). The indirect object receives the thematic role of recipient marked by the dative ke. The analysis demonstrates that the dative recipients usually have the implication of a receiver, listener and perceiver, because the verbs that take these roles are generally dynamic in nature.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipient with dative ke</th>
<th>Implication of the thematic role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic verbs</td>
<td>Gloss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de</td>
<td>‘give’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhedį</td>
<td>‘send’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bol</td>
<td>‘tell’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dekh-aa</td>
<td>‘show’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 16 shows how the thematic role of a recipient can have different implications, with the help of few ditransitive verbs. The table illustrates that the indirect objects of the verb de ‘give’ and bhed ṣ ‘send’ usually imply the thematic role ‘receivers’. Again, the indirect object of the verb bol ‘tell’ suggests the role of ‘listener’ and that of dekh-aa ‘show’ suggests ‘perceiver’. The recipient and beneficiary are not proto-typical patients. Nevertheless, they have some of proto-patient properties, by virtue of which, they occupy the indirect object position. The proto-properties of indirect object in AS are illustrated in Table 17.

Table 17 The proto-properties of indirect objects in AS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Indirect Objects Case</th>
<th>Change of state</th>
<th>Causally affected</th>
<th>Stationary</th>
<th>No Independent existence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>de</td>
<td>recipient (dative ke)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhed ṣ</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bol,</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dekh-aa</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>de</th>
<th>beneficiary (dative khātir)</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>RELATIVELY INDEPENDENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bhed ṣ</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>-DO-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bol,</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>-DO-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dekh-aa</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>-DO-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17 shows that indirect objects with recipient dative ke have more proto-patient properties than beneficiary indirect objects with dative khātir. In case of mental transfer verbs, like, bol ‘tell’ dekh-aa ‘show’, the indirect dative object, with the thematic role of a recipient, can be seen as being causally affected as it is the receiver, perceiver and listener of the action. Unlike, recipient, beneficiary is not causally affected by the action, as the action is intended to affect it but not
necessarily affects it. In ditransitive construction, both the recipient and beneficiary remain stationary. However, with regard to the property of ‘no independent existence’, it is seen that the recipient is more involved in the event named by the verb than the beneficiary. Thus, the latter is relatively independent than the former.

4.5. **Thematic hierarchy of object arguments: Degree of affectedness**

Analysis of the direct and indirect objects in AS shows that object arguments maintain a hierarchy of the thematic roles as shown in figure 32. The objects are arranged as per degree of affectedness, where patient outranks theme, recipient and beneficiary. According to the hierarchy of grammatical function, direct object is higher than the indirect objects. This is true in terms of the thematic hierarchy, as well. The patient and the theme are the usual cases assigned to the direct objects in AS followed by the recipient and beneficiary, the thematic roles of the indirect objects. The proto-patient properties of the object argument once again validate the point that the greater number of proto-patient properties the object has, the higher it is in the degree of affectedness.

**Degree of affectedness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>More patient like</th>
<th>Less patient like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergoes change</td>
<td>does not undergo change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causally affected</td>
<td>not/partially causally affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationary</td>
<td>Stationary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No independent existence</td>
<td>relatively independent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 32 Degree of affectedness of object in AS*

4.6. **Conclusion**

The analysis of the object argument in AS shows that the case marking is dependent upon factors like animacy, definiteness and specificity. The thematic roles of the arguments in the direct object position, like that of the subjects can be
organised in a hierarchy, where the patient outranks the theme, which again outranks the oblique objects. Dowty’s proto-role theory very aptly explains why the thematic roles do not have one to one correspondence with the case feature in the language under study. The argument that occupy the direct object position do not always entail all the proto-patient properties like undergoing ‘change of state’ and ‘incremental theme’ and so on. Depending upon the nature of the verb, an object may undergo change of state physically or mentally. On the other hand, there are some that do not undergo any definite change or are not affected by the action. Dowty (1991) states that one very important criterion of patient hood is the property of ‘being causally affected’ by the action named by the verb whereas, analysis of the AS data shows that, not all verbs imply totally affected objects. Rather, the degree of affectedness can be seen as a continuum between more affected and less affected patient. The dynamic action verbs that physically affect the arguments are considered to be proto-typical patients followed by arguments that are mentally affected, as that of ‘scold’ and ‘remember’. This is followed by perception verbs like ‘see’ and finally by stative verb ‘know’. The oblique objects take the various non-canonical cases marked by instrumental se, ablative se, locative me/ospre and associative sąxe. In case of oblique objects, locative me/ospre, implies affectedness with dynamic verb biswas kar ‘trust do’ to whereas, with stative ahe ‘have’ it implies abstract location. Similarly, associative sąxe with dynamic verb implies affectedness whereas, with stative verb it does not.

In case of ditransitive construction with double objects, the direct object here is normally in theme role and hence, is next to the proto-patient in the hierarchy. The indirect objects with the thematic role of the recipient and beneficiary come next to it in the hierarchy. The reason behind this has been explained with the help of the proto-role theory. The theme entails the proto-patient property of undergoing change of position in the sense of being ‘transfer’. Whereas, neither the recipient nor the beneficiary undergo such changes. Again, the argument with role of a recipient is the one who ‘receives’, in that sense can be considered more involved.
in the action than the beneficiary for whom ‘the action is done’ or so to say who is supposed to be ‘benefited by the action’. From this perspective, the recipient is more affected than the beneficiary. The verbs like de ‘give’, bhedṣ ‘send’, bol ‘tell’ and dekh-aa ‘show’ are dynamic in nature. Thus, in the hierarchy of ditransitives, the theme outranks recipient, which again outranks the beneficiary. The hierarchy of grammatical function (Chapter 2) can be understood in terms of the hierarchy of the thematic roles where direct objects outrank indirect objects and the indirect objects outrank the obliques or the objects of the transitivised intransitives. From the discussion of the objects and their proto-properties, it appears that each object position maintains a sub-hierarchy of thematic roles based on the verbal properties.