Discourse and the adverbial domain:
Hindi-Urdu presupposition trigger vaapas

Jyoti Iyer

University of Massachusetts Amherst
The puzzle: A second focus-pattern

- Hindi-Urdu is known to have a preverbal focus position (PFP)
- Evidence for PFP comes from two facts that travel together:
  - When arguments occur in non-canonical word order (i.e. not S-IO-DO-V)...  
  - ...focus is interpreted on the immediately preverbal constituent
- This poster looks at sentences where:
  - Arguments occur in canonical order (i.e. SO-IO-DO-V)...  
  - ...with presuppositional adverb _vaapas_ ‘back’ in different surface positions
- Each configuration comes with different focus interpretation:
  - Focus is obligatory when the adverb is anywhere except PFP
  - Focus _must_ be interpreted in the zone following the adverb (“focus-zone”) (parallel to _kyaa_-facts noted in Bhatt & Dayal 2014/2020)
  - Within the focus-zone, focus _can_ be interpreted on any one of _multiple_ constituents
The takeaway

• Manipulation of the order of arguments relative to each other is not the only way to indicate focus

• PFP is always available but not the only place to interpret focus

• Where there are multiple constituents in the focus-zone, prosodic prominence appears to be obligatory to focus something other than the constituent right-adjacent to vaapas

• I present a semantic analysis for vaapas putting it in vP. Implications:
  • The standard analysis of PFP which puts FocusP just above vP and moves the F-marked item to Spec,FocusP...
  • ...wrongly predicts that the F-marked item will always be adjacent to vaapas
  • ...and leaves unexplained the existence of a “focus-zone” and the multiple options for where focus can be interpreted