

Workshop

Argument-coding patterns in the languages of Pamir, Hindu Kush and Karakoram: Exploring morphosyntactic and lexical variation

4-5 December 2026, Stockholm University

The aim of the workshop is to bring together researchers working on the languages of Pamir, Hindu Kush and Karakoram, a mountainous area also known as *Hindu Kush–Karakoram* or *Peristan* in recent publications (Liljegren 2020, 2023). Many of these languages are endangered and remain under-described. In this context, it is particularly important to foster collaboration between linguists currently working on the languages of this convergence area and review those aspects of languages that have received less attention in the existing literature.

In this workshop, we propose to focus on argument-coding patterns, a topic that often lacks a systematic account in older descriptions and has only recently started to be studied from a comparative perspective. Some of the understudied aspects of argument coding in the languages of Peristan are mentioned below.

- Split intransitivity. Described under various names in the existing literature, split intransitivity is observed, for example, in Kashmiri where intransitive verbs are divided into those with subjects in the Nominative case and those with subjects in the Ergative case (Rehman 2011: 224-227). Various split intransitivity effects have also been identified in the languages of the Shughni-Yazghulami branch (Wendtland 2008: 428-429; Parker 2023; Chistiakova & Verstraete 2025) and Pashto (David 2014: 453).
- Alignment shifts. Variation in alignment is often caused by a diachronic shift from one type to another. For example, in some Pamir languages, the rare double oblique alignment is giving way to nominative-accusative alignment (Sergienko 2025). By contrast, in some varieties of Shina, the ergative alignment has been strengthened to varying degrees, possibly due to the Tibetan influence (Hook & Koul 2004: 213-214; Schmidt & Kohistani 2008: 51-52; Radloff & Liljegren 2022: 323-330).
- Experiencer subjects with non-nominative marking. Although this phenomenon is well-known for South Asian languages, it is still unclear how widespread it is in Peristan. Furthermore, when present, it appears to be far from uniform. For instance, both Palula and Kalasha allow Oblique subjects with certain verbs, but in Kalasha, this type of argument structure necessarily involves causative morphology on the verb (Bashir 1990, 2015; Liljegren 2016: 321).
- Other less common argument-coding frames. It is worth noting trivalent verbs, which in some languages allow double object frames (see, e.g., Halfmann 2022: 123-124). Additionally, meteorological predicates are noted to behave in special ways (Hook & Zia 2005: 178-179; Liljegren 2016: 319-320). One more seriously understudied topic is argument structure variation in light verb constructions (Liljegren 2010).

We invite submissions describing studies related (but not limited) to the topics presented above. Abstracts up to 500 words (excluding references) should be submitted via anastasia.panova@ling.su.se by **May 15**.

Important dates

Abstract submission deadline: May 15

Notification of acceptance: August 15

Registration deadline: November 1

Workshop: December 4-5

Format

The workshop will be held in a hybrid format, with all talks livestreamed on Zoom, enabling participants to join discussions both in person and online. However, online presentations will not be permitted (if you are absolutely unable to travel to Stockholm, please contact the organizers).

Organizing committee

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