Polar *kya*

María Biezma  
UMass Amherst  
maria.biezma@umass.edu

[This talk is based on joint work with members of the research project *Information Structure and Questions in Urdu/Hindi* (P4, FOR2111).]

In their seminal work on Urdu/Hindi polar *kya*, Bhatt & Dayal (2020) propose a new class of question particles, *polar question particles*. As part of their analysis, the authors also argue that alternative questions in Urdu/Hindi are disjunctions of polar questions. However, Bhatt & Dayal (2020) pioneering work leaves unexplained potential counterexamples to their proposal found in embedded contexts, as well as speakers’ intuitions regarding the use of *kya* to trigger sometimes sarcasm and sometimes politeness inferences. In this paper we pay attention to those cases in conjunction with other available empirical observations to paint a much simpler yet more explanatory picture of what *kya* is and what *kya* does.