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Topics in the syntax of Sarikoli

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English Summary

This dissertation is a synchronic description of Sarikoli focusing on syntax. Sarikoli is an Eastern Iranian language spoken exclusively in China, and its speakers primarily reside in Varshide, a mountainous county on the western border of Xinjiang, China.

The first chapter is an overview of the Sarikoli people and language in their geographical, historical, and cultural context. The classification, typological profile, and sociolinguistic situation of the Sarikoli language are described, and previous research conducted on the language is reviewed. The final section deals with the organization of this description, fieldwork foundation, and methodology.

Chapter 2 describes nouns and the noun phrase (NP). The first section gives an overview of the types and various functions of nouns. This is followed by a section on grammatical functions, which are marked on NPs through pronoun stem types, plural suffixes, and function-marking morphemes. Finally, NP-internal constituents are introduced in terms of their function and relative ordering, and coordination of NPs is described.

Chapter 3 describes pronouns and demonstratives, two types of deictic shifters which are closely related in Sarikoli. The complete gamut of related topics includes: personal pronouns indicating speech act participants (first and second persons); bound pronouns used for marking subject-verb agreement and aspect; nominal demonstratives referring to non-speech act participants, which show distinction for relative distance from the speaker; demonstrative clitics which indicate anaphora and cataphora; local demonstratives which refer to places; manner demonstratives referring to certain manners of performing an action; reflexive pronouns; and reciprocal pronouns.

Chapter 4 describes possession. The first section demonstrates NP-internal possession, and the second section presents the predicative possessive construction.

Chapter 5 describes comparison. There are two ways of expressing comparison: the mono-clausal construction and the bi-clausal construction. Superlatives are then treated as extensions of comparative constructions.

Following that, statements of equivalence, used when the Comparee and Standard have the same degree of a given Parameter, are described. Finally, the correlative comparative, which involves two comparative clauses, is presented.

Chapter 6 is devoted to the full array of adverbial modifiers, which modify predicates, clauses, adjectives, and other adverbial modifiers. They include: temporal adverbials that specify the time of a state or event; frequency adverbials that indicate how often a situation occurs; manner adverbials that describe the manner in which an action is performed; degree adverbials which show the degree of a certain attribute or action; epistemic adverbials that express the speaker's view on the likelihood of a situation occurring; and adverbials derived from adjectives and nouns with an adverbializer suffix.

Chapter 7 is a presentation of three major moods: declarative, imperative, and interrogative. The imperative and interrogative moods have multiple subtypes, which are described in their subsections in terms of their morphosyntactic marking.

Chapter 8 examines clause structure. The basic ordering of constituents is outlined, followed by an overview of each of the clause types that are present in Sarikoli: those with verbal predicates, existential predicates, copula predicates, and extended copula predicates. The final section provides a brief description of the placement of non-obligatory arguments.

Chapter 9 introduces various ways of expressing negation. Negation of verbal predicates, existential predicates, copula predicates, and certain individual constituents are discussed in the initial sections. Next, negation of imperatives (prohibitive) is described. The following section presents positive and negative independent polarity forms, which serve as a one-word response to polar questions. Finally, two prefixes capable of deriving negative lexemes are introduced.

Chapter 10 is devoted to clause combinations. The first section is divided into subsections which introduce various types of coordination: cumulative, sequential, causal, adversative, disjunctive, and asyndetic. The second section deals with subordination, subdivided into three types: relative clauses, complement clauses, and adverbial clauses. Each type of subordinate clause is divided into subtypes based on morphosyntactic structure and function.

Chapter 11 describes modality, namely, modal constructions indicating various semantic contrasts based on the speaker's or the agent's perspective

on a situation: possibility, ability, intentional, desiderative, imminent, permission, obligation, hypothetical, optative, reminder, and supposition.

Chapter 12 describes an evidentiality strategy used to report non-firsthand information and new information. Although they are both marked by perfect aspect, they have distinct functions and are examined in detail in separate sections. This chapter provides examples of perfective, imperfective, and non-verbal propositions marked for evidential or new information, which illustrate the possible uses and interpretations of perfect stem verbs.

Finally, as the concluding chapter, Chapter 13 lists routine phrases and expressions, including greetings, leavetakings, thanking, and typical or idiomatic speech on everyday topics, which are central to phatic exchanges and basic conversations.