

Anne-Christie Hellenthal

A grammar of Sheko

This thesis investigates the grammar of Sheko, an Omotic language spoken in southwest Ethiopia. The study presents an analysis of the phonology, morphology and syntax of the language, amply illustrated by examples. The supplements contain a sample of texts and an extensive word list.

Among other things, the author discusses the interrelation between gender, definiteness and number in nominal morphology. Some nominal morphology also occurs on verbal forms. In the verb system, stem formation, aspectual and modal distinctions as well as stance marking are treated. The language has a rich array of complex verb constructions, such as medial clauses and serial verb constructions, next to different types of subordinate clauses. In relative clauses, a resumptive pronoun may occur before the antecedent. One of the divergent ways in which interrogatives are formed is by 'subtractive morphology', i.e. dropping off a grammatical element which is obligatorily present in declaratives. Furthermore, subject clitics attach to a variety of hosts in correlation to information structure and focus.

These and a number of other issues make the work valuable for specialists of Omotic and Afroasiatic studies as well as for general linguists and anyone interested in the typology of language.

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