

Topics in the syntax of Sarikoli

This book is a synchronic description of the syntax of Sarikoli, an Eastern Iranian and Pamir language spoken exclusively in China. Sarikoli speakers primarily reside in Varshide, a mountainous county on the western border of Xinjiang, China. The language is not used in any official domains and has no literary sources.

This work is the first modern linguistic description of Sarikoli syntax in English. The approach is theory-neutral, presenting and describing language data with commonly-accepted linguistic terminology. It includes copious linguistic examples transcribed in IPA accompanied by morpheme glosses and free translations. The entire corpus of texts and all linguistic research were gathered and conducted in the field by the researcher in cooperation with native speakers of Sarikoli.

The introductory chapter provides an overview of the Sarikoli people and language in their geographical, historical, and cultural context. The typological profile, sociolinguistic situation, and previous research conducted on the language are discussed, along with short summaries on phonology, morphology, and verbs. The following chapters focus on different topics in the syntax of Sarikoli: noun phrase, pronouns and demonstratives, possession, comparison, adverbial modifiers, mood, clause structure, negation, clause combinations, modality, and evidentiality and new information. The concluding chapter introduces routine phrases and expressions, including greetings and leavetakings, thanking, and typical or idiomatic speech common in phatic exchanges and conversations. The appendices include transcripts of oral texts covering a wide range of genre and topics, as well as an orthography proposed by a native Sarikoli scholar.

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