LTS Story Relay Torch – Sar̃ifa

Keras Saryan
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1 Text

Kārgā ts'ēshē, k'ijina sujō shacenginī. Fer̃ila yē shangipā royizē, hī sōba sagwalirē, tilkina c'āra bōlgāwumu gōngunō.

2 Vocabulary

The following part-of-speech abbreviations are used in entries:

n.	noun	*q.*	quantifier
num.	numeral	*v.i.*	intransitive verb
post.	postposition	*v.t.*	transitive verb

Nouns are entered using their singular, plural and paucal forms if they distinguish all forms, otherwise only the appropriate number forms are entered. Verbs are entered using their first person singular present, preterite and imperfect forms followed by the imperfective converb.

bōlgāwa, bōlgāwumu, bōlgāwumuna *n.* committee, council, discussion group, board, panel.

c'āra *q.* several, many, diverse.

fer̃ila *n.* north.

gōngwat, gōngur̃a, gowongat, gōngō *v.t.* to gather, to collect, to form.

gwalat, gwalda, gaulat, gwalē *v.t.* to speak, to talk.

hī *num.* 1 • one. 2 • a(n) (specific indefinite article).

kārgā *n.* earth, ground.

k'ijū, k'ijina, k'ijenna *n.* rabbit, hare.

rewit, rōla, reliwit, rōyē *v.t.* to see.

shangat, shangir̃a, shacengat, shangē *v.t.* to dance.

sōbu, sōbimu, sōbemuna *n.* answer, reply, response.

sujut, sujur̃a, suzujut, sujō *v.i.* to be joyful, to rejoice.

tilkī, tilkina, tilkenna *n.* mouse, rat.

ts'ēhit, ts'ēhir̃a, ts'ozīhit, ts'ēshē *v.t.* to sing.

yē *post.* at, by, near, next to.

3 Grammar notes[1]

3.1 Introduction and overview

Saɾ̃ifa [ˈsaɾɪɸə] is a synthetic head-final language with a basic constituent order of subject–object–verb. The language displays a nominative–accusative morphosyntactic alignment, though case marking is found only on a subset of pronouns; verbs agree with subjects for person and number.

3.2 Phonology

3.2.1 Phonemic inventory

There are thirty consonant phonemes, shown in Table 1.

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Palatal	Retroflex	Velar/Glottal Plain	Labialised
Nasal	m	n				
Plosive	p b ɓ	t' t d			k' k g	kʷ' kʷ gʷ
Affricate		ts' ts	tʃ' tʃ dʒ			
Fricative	ɸ	s z	ʃ		h	hʷ
Rhotic		ɾ		ɻ		
Lateral		l				
Glide			j			w

Table 1: Consonant phonemes

Consonants are romanised as in IPA but for the following exceptions: glottalised consonants are romanised like their pulmonic counterparts but with a following apostrophe, labialised consonants like plain counterparts but with a following ⟨w⟩, the palatal sibilants /tʃ, dʒ, ʃ/ are romanised ⟨c, j, sh⟩, /ɸ/ is romanised ⟨f⟩ and the sonorants /ɾ, ɻ, j/ are romanised ⟨r̃, r, y⟩.

There are five short–long pairs of monophthong vowel phonemes, shown in Table 2. For the non-low vowels, short vowels are lax and long vowels are tense.

	Front	Back
High	ɪ iː	ʊ uː
Mid	ɛ eː	ɔ oː
Low	a aː	

Table 2: Monophthong vowel phonemes

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1 The following glossing abbreviations are used: 1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person, EXCL = exclusive, INCL = inclusive, INDEF = indefinite, NPST = non-past, PL = plural, SG = singular.

Short vowels are romanised using their corresponding basic Latin graphemes, i.e. ⟨i, u, e, o, a⟩. Long vowels are romanised using macrons on those same graphemes, i.e. ⟨ī, ū, ē, ō, ā⟩.

When unstressed, short /a/ is reduced to [ə]; in certain varieties, this reduction takes place even with stressed /a/.

In addition to these ten monophthongs, there are also two falling diphthongs: /aɪ, aʊ/, romanised ⟨ai, au⟩. Neither of these occurs in unstressed syllables.

3.2.2   Syllable structure

Syllables are maximally CVC. Word-medially, only the nasals /m, n/ and the liquids /l, ɾ, ɻ/ may appear in the coda. All consonants but /z, h, hʷ, ɾ/ may also appear word-medially as geminates. /z, ɾ/ are only found word-medially. Of the total thirty consonant phonemes, only twelve are found word-finally, namely the nasals /m, n/, the plain voiceless plosives and affricates /p, t, k, ts, tʃ/, the voiceless non-glottal fricatives /ɸ, s, ʃ/ and the liquids /l, ɻ/.

3.2.3   Stress

Primary stress falls on the penultimate syllable of the word if heavy—i.e. closed or containing a long vowel or diphthong—otherwise it falls on the antepenultimate syllable.

3.3   Nominal number

Nouns inflect for three grammatical numbers: singular, paucal and plural. The plural is marked by one of six different lexically-determined suffixes: *-na, -la, -wa, -ga, -ri* and *-mu*. Plural forms often also involve segmental changes to the right-edge of the noun stem such as vowel changes or consonant assimilation. A small number of examples is given below:

(1) a. b'umī, b'unna 'child(ren)'   d. t'aɾ̃ō, t'aɾuna 'fish'
     b. gab'ā, gab'iwa 'girl(s)'   e. kaɾ̃a, kaɾ̃iga 'foot/feet'
     c. b'agī, b'agila 'dog(s)'   f. mara, marri 'rock(s)'

The paucal is formed by adding the suffix *-na* to the plural form of a noun, though in certain cases this may cause additional changes, e.g. lowering of stressed high vowels or raising of medial post-tonic low vowels. Note that often the only difference between the paucal and plural forms of a noun is a geminate instead of singleton /n/. See the example paucal forms below of the nouns already seen above:

(2) a. b'umenna '(some) children'   d. t'aɾ̃unna '(some) fish'
     b. gab'ōna '(some) girls'   e. kaɾ̃egina '(some) feet'
     c. b'agenna '(some) dogs'   f. marrina '(some) rocks'

3.4 Indefinite specificity

TL;DR *Hī* 'one' can be used as a singular indefinite article, just sparingly.

There are no dedicated definite articles in Sařifa (though demonstratives may sometimes serve a similar function) but the numeral *hī* 'one' can be used prenominally as a singular indefinite article; however, it is only typically used with specific as opposed to non-specific indefinites. That is, a referent denoting a particular individual in the speaker's mind (rather any member of a given set) which the hearer is not expected to already know. It is also most often used when the specificity of the referent is particularly relevant in the context of the discourse.

    Consider the example in (3) below.

(3) Dā (hī) gura dubat.
     1SG INDEF rope use.NPST.1SG
     'I (will) use the/a rope.'

If *hī* is present, this signals that the speaker has a particular rope in mind and that this choice is relevant to the discourse, e.g. because the speaker intends to continue talking about the rope or because only that specific one will do. If *hī* is omitted, it implies that either any rope will do, or that, even if the speaker does have a particular rope in mind, this fact is not especially important in the conversational context. The absence of *hī* may also mean that the particular rope is definite, i.e. that it is already established in the discourse and assumed to be recoverable by the listener.

    Note also that in this function, *hī* is unstressed (and often reduced to [hɪ] rather than [hiː]) but it is always stressed and unreduced when used as a standalone numeral.

3.5 Verbs

3.5.1 *Verb stems*

Inflected verb forms use either a short or long form of the stem. Which one is used is dependent on tense and aspect. The short form is the default or basic form; the long form is derived from the short form by what was a historical process of prefixed reduplication of the initial CV unit of the root, though this is now very often somewhat obscured in modern forms by subsequent sound changes. Examples are of short–long correspondence are illustrated in (4) below using third person singular non-past and imperfect forms.

(4) a. nāmī ~ nanāmī 'pray'   f. ts'elkū ~ ts'ezilkū 'cut'
     b. yāřī ~ yayāřī 'undergo'   g. b'onū ~ b'owunū 'hit'
     c. cūzū ~ cujūzū 'swim'   h. fīkī ~ fepīkī 'play'
     d. dubī ~ duřubī 'use'   i. gānī ~ gawānī 'eat'
     e. kegī ~ kegikī 'jump'   j. sorī ~ sořulī 'fall'

3.5.2   Verb agreement

Finite verbs agree with their subjects in person and number (though there no paucal verb forms, with plurals being used instead). There are two sets of agreement suffixes, referred to as "short" and "long" (though a given short suffix is not necessarily always actually shorter than the corresponding long suffix). The commonest forms of these are summarised in Table 3 below.

		Short		Long	
		SG	**PL**	**SG**	**PL**
1	**EXCL**	-at, -it, -ut	-iřin, -uřin	-iřa, -uřa, -ta, -da	-eřina, -ořina
	INCL	—	-ak, -ik, -uk	—	-igwa, -ugwa
2		-an, -in, -un	-ilī, -ulī	-ina, -una	-ilē, -ulē
3		-ī, -ū	-inī, -unī	-ā, -a, -ya, -wa	-inō, -unō

Table 3: Example short and long verb-agreement suffixes

The choice of whether a short or long suffix is used depends largely on the tense and mood of the verb. In the non-past, the short suffixes are always used and, in the preterite, the long suffixes are always used; in the imperfective, however, though the short suffixes are typically used, some verbs irregularly take the long suffixes.

3.5.3   Tense

There are three morphological tenses: non-past, preterite and imperfect. This is expressed by particular combinations of the verb stem and verb-agreement suffixes. The non-past is formed by using the short versions of both the stem and agreement suffixes; the preterite is formed by combining the short stem with the long agreement suffixes. The imperfect is, by default, formed by using the long stem and short agreement suffixes; however, a small number of verbs show an alternative formation strategy, combining the long versions of both the stem and agreement suffixes. This is summarised in Table 4 below.

	Stem	Agreement
Non-past	short	short
Preterite	short	long
Imperfect (df.)	long	short
Imperfect (alt.)	long	long

Table 4: Summary of tense marking

The marking of tense is further illustrated by the partial conjugation of *dubat* 'to use' provided in Table 5.

		Non-past		Preterite		Imperfect	
		SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL
1	EXCL	dubat	dubiɾ̃in	dubiɾ̃a	dubeɾ̃ina	duɾ̃ubat	duɾ̃obiɾ̃in
	INCL	—	dubak	—	dubigwa	—	duɾ̃ubak
2		duban	dubilī	dubina	dubilē	duɾ̃uban	duɾ̃obilī
3		dubī	dubinī	dubā	dubinō	duɾ̃ubī	duɾ̃obinī

Table 5: Partial conjugation of *dubat* 'to use'

Note that this also has stress-related raising of /ʊ/ to /ɔ/ in certain imperfect forms.

3.5.4   Converbs

Converbs are plentiful and frequent in Saɾ̃ifa, often being used in place of conjunctions or (non-verbal) adverbs. They may occur either in situ in clauses or extracted and fronted. Converbs most often share their subject with the main verb, though this is not necessarily always the case.

The generic converb is marked by *-ē* or *-ō*. It is assumed to have the same tense as the main verb and usually conveys that an action or state is either simultaneous or sequential relative to that of the main verb.

The anterior converb is marked by *-izē* or *-uzē* and expresses that an action or state occurs before or results in the action or state described by the main verb.

The purposive converb is marked by *-irē* or *-urē* and indicates that an action or state is the reason for the action or state of the main verb.

3.5.5   Infinitives

The infinitive is a type of verbal noun which typically denotes the activity or state expressed by the verb. It is formed by adding the suffix *-pā* to the short verb stem, usually with a connecting vowel.

3.5.6   Applicatives

Saɾ̃ifa possesses five applicatives, including the locative applicative, marked on verb by the prefix *sa-*. This adds an object to the verb which expresses a location at or relative to which the action of the verb is performed. Applicativised verbs may also take on metaphorical, extended or idiomatic meanings.