

## Tajik

2008-10-29 17:39:21

**Tajik.** By **Shinji Ido.** (Language of the world/materials 442.) Munich: LINCOM Europa, 2005. Pp. 98. ISBN [3895863165](#). \$71.96.

Reviewed by [Andreea S. Calude](#), *The University of Auckland*

Today Tajik is recognized as an autonomous West-Iranian language, independent from Persian and Dari, through genetically linked to them. Tajik, spoken in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, is also influenced by Uzbek, Arabic, and Russian, and even has a ‘sprinkling of words of Chinese origin’ (2). The term ‘Tajik’ has itself been used to denote different things at different times in history, that is, it has been used to differentiate various linguistic, geographical, religious, or ethnic groups of people—though these never quite coincided exactly. Tajik intellectuals, as Ido refers to the people concerned with promoting the Tajik language, were faced with making decisions about which alphabet to use (Latin or Cyrillic), which dialect to base the Tajik language on, and how to incorporate it into the identity of the people living in Tajikistan.

□

After describing these issues in the first chapter of the book (1–9), I moves to giving a brief discussion of the phonetics and phonology of Tajik in Ch. 2 (11–16). First, vowel and consonant phonemes are given, and then syllable structure and stress are outlined (all examples given throughout the book are in the Cyrillic alphabet).

□

Ch. 3, the longest chapter in the book, concerns the morphology of Tajik (17–78). The chapter begins with nominal morphology (17–42), treating nouns (including number gender, definitiveness, case, possession), pronouns (personal pronouns, honorific expressions, demonstrative pronouns, reflexives, interrogative pronouns, question words), numerals (cardinal numbers, fractions, ordinal numbers, classifiers, arithmetic vocabulary), adjectives (comparison, intensification, disintensification), and adverbs. Verbal morphology is then discussed (43–71), treating past- and present-tense stems, person and number forms, nonfinite forms, copular verbs, aspect, modality, various verb paradigms (simple past, past imperfective, past perfect, past progressive, present progressive, present imperfective, future), principal mood categories (including inferential, imperative and optative, conditional, speculative, and intentional), participles as predicates, causative voice, passive voice, negation, and auxiliary verbs. Ch. 3 also deals with adpositions (71–72) and outlines word-formation processes (72–78), detailing noun formation, verb formation, adjective formation, and adverb formation.

□

Ch. 4 is concerned with Tajik syntax (79–85). Three main issues are treated, namely copular verb constructions, coordination (including ‘and’, ‘or’, and ‘but’ coordination), and subordination (with mention of relative clauses, participial modifiers, adverbial clauses, and converb constructions). Interestingly, I makes a point in noting some differences in syntax between spoken and written registers. The final chapter (87–88) gives a small inventory of three short passages: a magazine article (1929), a speech excerpt (2001), and an excerpt from a news report (2003).

## eLanguage Book Notices

Tajik

□

*Tajik* is a very accessible, clearly written, and well-organized book, which can be used by language enthusiasts and professional linguists alike to obtain a quick overview of this fascinating and, to date, underdocumented language.