

## Relative clauses and passive constructions in Domari

Bruno Herin

Domari is a Central Indo-Aryan language spoken in Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Jordan and Palestine, by historically itinerant populations whose self-appellation is Dom. Although related to Romani, there is no evidence that two languages split up from a common Indo-Aryan forerunner. Two dialectal clusters have so far been identified: southern Domari spoken in Jordan and Palestine and northern Domari, mostly spoken in Lebanon, Syria and Turkey. Northern Domari further divides into three varieties: Beirut-Damascus, Coastal Syrian and Aleppo.

- Relativisation

Domari makes use of the gap strategy, in all likelihood replicated from Arabic. Two relativisers are found: Turkish-Kurdish derived *ki* (1) and colloquial Arabic derived *illi* (2). Some speakers may also use the mixed form *ki lli* (3).

1	<i>dārdōr</i>	<i>kərī</i>	<i>ki</i>	<i>ğib</i>	<i>karm-a</i>	<i>wat</i>
	see.PFV.2S	hou	REL	tongu	do.IPFV.1SG-PS	3SG.SU
	G	e		e	T	P
	'Did you see the house I was talking about?'					

2	<i>sāʻ</i>	<i>illi</i>	<i>kā</i>	<i>wēštəm-əs</i>	<i>čāğōr-sa</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>tər-sa</i>
	hou	REL	FUT	stay.SBJV.1SG-3S	your_kid	and	you.OBL-COM
	r			G			

<i>mā</i>	<i>ē</i>	<i>sāʻt-ə-m</i>	<i>pēnme</i>	<i>şad</i>	<i>qāṭ</i>
1SG	DEM.OBL	hour-OBL-IN	earn.IPFV.1S	hundred	poun
			G		d
'The hour I spent with you and your son costs me one hundred pounds'					

3	<i>kay</i>	<i>kā</i>	<i>lakarər</i>	<i>də</i>	<i>kam</i>	<i>ki</i>	<i>lli</i>	<i>hrə</i>	<i>hrə</i>
	wha	FUT	do.SBJV.3S	DM	work	REL	REL	become.PFV.3S	become.PFV.3S
	t		G					G	G

<i>n-sakare</i>	<i>lpērār-əs</i>
NEG-can.IPFV.3SG	return.SBJV.3SG-OBJ.3SG
'What can he do? He can't return the things that happened'	

- Passive

Passivisation is morphologically coded on the verb by way of a suffix *ī / yā*. Perfective stems select the allomorph *-ī* whereas *-yā* attaches to stems in the imperfective. The use of the passive involves the total demotion of the agent/subject, as there are no known ways of expressing the agent. This state of affairs is similar to Levantine Arabic in which agents of passive constructions are extremely rare, albeit not impossible.

4 *xāst-ō-m*      *baṅġ-ī-r-a*

hand-SG-1S      break-PASS-PFV-3S

G                      G

"I broke my hand"

5 *xərčk-əs*                      *fkəndə*                      *alli*      *nə-fkən-yā-r-a*

saddle-ACC                      sell.PFV.3SG                      REL      NEG-sell-PASS.IPFV-3SG-PST

*āndə*                      *məṣrī*                      *ši*      *badālōs*

bring.PFV.3SG                      money                      and      instead

"He sold the (old) saddle and could even get some money for what couldn't be sold"