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The Secret Life of a Turkic Lexeme: Grammaticalization in Modern Uyghur

Abstract:

Grammaticalization theory describes a particular type of language change whereby a lexical word becomes a grammatical word. Using a few light verb constructions as examples, this lecture offers an illustration of how the grammaticalization process works in modern Uyghur. It then goes on to explore verb typology in Turkic and provides data from Old Turkic, Chaghatay (Eastern Middle Turkic), and Modern Turkic languages to show how the serial verb structure develops its new function in Modern Turkic, ending with a demonstration of a few of the structures that undergo the grammaticalization process between late Chaghatay and modern Uyghur.

Short Bio:

Gülnar Eziz earned her PhD in Linguistic Anthropology at the University of Kansas and served there as a Research and Teaching Assistant in Uyghur and Chaghatay. Prior to her arrival in the US, she studied at Xinjiang University, where she earned both her BA and her MA degrees and published multiple peer-reviewed essays on Uyghur language and linguistics. Dr. Eziz was appointed in 2020 as preceptor in Uyghur and East Middle Turkic (Chaghatay) languages in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University.