On the Discreteness of Grammar (Change): Turkic Serial Verbs

<u>Intro</u>: All Turkic languages have serial verb constructions (SVC), created as (1) and characterized by common intonation, meaning and TAM, Durie 1997, Erdal 2004. Starting point for the development of SVC was para/hypo-taxis constructions, Johanson 1995, Anderson 2005, the endpoint is fully grammatical serial verbs. So, only the lexical variety of V2s was accessible at some stage and the question is: **How grammatical function developed from lexical items?**

<u>Proposal:</u> I assume without discussion that grammaticalized V2s turned to F-heads, (2). To acquire grammatical meaning, V2 had to stop functioning as independent verbs heading their own clauses, (3). The stimulus for the reanalysis and consequent change of meaning from (3.a) to (3.c) is the replacement of complex structures by simple ones, Roberts & Roussou 2003. I adopt parsing simplicity, Hawkins 1994, Gibson 2000, as a measure of syntactic complexity. I also propose that novel grammatical meanings are in line with the decompositional/cartographical approach, Laenzlinger 2000, Cinque 2001, Pylkannen 2002, Ramchand 2008 a.o.
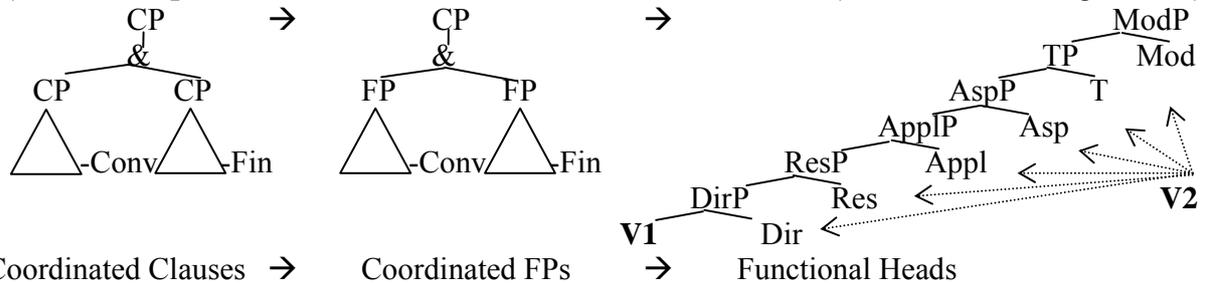
<u>Analysis:</u> The structure (3.c) is more economical than (3.a/b) w.r.t. parsing simplicity. Even if (3.a/b) and (3.c) have the same amount of items, the latter parsed faster since parsing the embedded clause in (3.a/b), the hearer has to keep in memory projecting ability of V2. Development of functional use of V2 was supported in two ways. On the one hand, syntactic items first attributed to V2, were reanalyzed as projected by V1, (3.b). On the other, clauses where V2 had no projections, (3.b), was restructured and lost their bi-clausal nature, (3.c). After appearance of the monoclausal pattern, the significant part of V2's lexical meaning got vanished.

What's the remainder? Grammatical meanings regularly derived across Turkic are in (4). The scenario was as follows: being a lexical item, V2 was merged as a verb and projected all necessary structure, but in the course of derivation every V2 raised and finally was surfaced in the position of the corresponding F-head, (3.c). After being semantically demolished, V2 started to enter the enumeration as F-head already. As shown in (2) and (4), directionals modify lexical meaning of V; resultatives are in ResP; applicatives are ApplLowPs; perfectives, inchoatives and terminatives are in AspP; progressives in TP; attemptives and capacitives in ModP. Below I test some predictions of my analysis. First, para/hypo-taxis constructions has no semantic constraints on V2. In spite of that, only those meanings should survive in process of semantic change that are regularly expressed by grammatical tools in the languages of the world. This is exactly what one can see in (4). Second, a single V1 is expected to have wider range of interpretations than a V1 combined with serial V2, since non-SVC clauses are not specified w.r.t. concrete grammatical features. Those features have to be introduced by some specific V2 placed in an appropriate F-head position. Indeed, (5) can have subject-oriented, "third part" or no applicative participant; (6) can denote either state or process. With the serial verbs, all examples receive "fixed" interpretation, (7-8). Third, high F-heads have propositional functions, whereas low F-heads affect the event structure of V1. What follows is that V2s placed in Mod and T should display less distributional constraints than other F-heads. This is born out: verbs like *see* and *lay* may attach to almost any V1 (in (9.a) *see* is used even with inanimate) and resultative verbs like *go* are much more restricted, see (9-10). Then, under the "functional ladder" scenario, the same grammatical meanings and features may be supplied by different verbs, that is also found in Turkic, (4). Finally, if V2 has more than one grammatical function, the appropriate meanings should be shared between adjacent F-heads. Indeed, verbs like *come* (directional/resultative), *take* (applicative/perfective), *give* (applicative/inchoative) located in the neighboring heads, (4).

<u>Sum:</u> Semantic changes in Turkic SVC are drawn by syntactic reanalysis and follow discrete predefined steps, that supports the structural view on grammaticalization, Newmeyer 2001 a.o.

(1)   [CP   [XP$_1$] … [XP$_2$] …   [VP   Lexical V1-Conv + Serial V2-Finite Form]]

(2)   **Development of SVC in Turkic**   (NB! Left Branching matters)

CP → CP → ModP

Coordinated Clauses →   Coordinated FPs →   Functional Heads

(3.a)   [Subj(V1/V2) ARG(V2)… [ARG(V1)   …   V1-Conv]   V2-finite]
(3.b)   [Subj(V1/V2) …   [V1-Conv]   V2-finite]
(3.c)   Subj   ARG   ARG   …   [V1-Lex V2-Ser-finite]

(4.a) **Verb**	*come/go*	*come/go/remain*	*give/take*	*take*	*give*	*finish*	*stand/lay*	*see*	*know*
Semantics	*DIRECT*	*RES*	*APPL*	*PERF*	*INCH*	*TERM*	*PROGR*	*ATTMP*	*CAPAC*

(4.b)   DirP   <   ResP   <   ApplP <   AspP   <   TP   <   ModP

(5)   kurmanbek   koj   soj-up   al-dy / ber-de   Kyrghyz
        Kurmanbek   ram   cut-CNV   give-PST / take-PST
Kurmanbek cut a ram (for himself / for somebody).

(6)   was^{j}a   mašany   kör-di   Tubalar
        Vas'a   Masha   see-Pst   (Shluinsky'09)
a. *Vas'a noticed Masha.*
b. *Vas'a saw Masha for some time.*

(7)   kurmanbek   koj   soj-up   al-dy   /   ber-de   Kyrghyz
        Kurmanbek   ram   cut-CNV   give-PST   /   take-PST
Kurmanbek cut a ram for himself ('give')   /   *for somebody* ('take').

(8)   was^{j}a   maša-ny   kör-üp   ber-di   Tubalar
        Vas'a   Masha-Acc   see-Conv   give-Pst   (Shluinsky'09)
a. *Vas'a noticed Masha.*
b. **Vas'a saw Masha for some time.*

(9.a) $^?$čaška tül-üp   kör-di (9.b) was^{j}a uxta-p   tur-dy   Tubalar
        cup   fall-Conv   see-Pst   Vas'a sleep-Conv   go-Pst   (Shluinsky'09)
The cup could fall. (ATTMPT)   *Vas'a was sleeping.* (PROGR)

(10.a) toš   qajyl-yp   par-dy (10.b) was^{j}a pyčyk š^{j}i-ip   par-dy Tubalar
        ice   melt-Conv   go-Pst   Vas'a letter write-Conv   go-Pst (Shluinsky'09)
The ice got melted. (RES)   *Vas'a wrote a letter and went.* (≠finished a letter, *RES)