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Yellow Uyghur

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Yellow Uyghur

Abstract

This article provides a brief introduction to Yellow Uyghur, an endangered Turkic language spoken in Gansu Province, China. Two audio recordings are provided with Turcological transcription, morphological glosses, and free English translation. Basic grammatical features of Yellow Uyghur are described.

Key words: Yellow Uyghur, endangered language, audio recording, grammatical description

Sarı Uygurca

Öz

Bu makale, Çin'in Gansu eyaletinde konuşulan Sarı Uygurca üzerine giriş niteliğinde kısa bir bilgi sunmaktadır. Bu Türk dilinden yapılmış iki ses kaydının çevriyazısı, satırarası morfolojik açıklamalar ve serbest İngilizce bir çeviri ile birlikte sunulmuştur. Çevriyazıda karşılaşılan bulgulara dayanarak Sarı Uygurcanın temel dilbilgisel özellikleri ele alınmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Sarı Uygurca, yok olma tehlikesi altındaki dil, ses kaydı, dilbilgisel betimleme

Introduction

Yellow Uyghur, also known as Western Yugur (Chinese *xībù yùgù*), is one of China's official ethnic minorities. It belongs to the Northeastern or Siberian branch of the Turkic languages and is closely related to the South Siberian Turkic languages. Yellow Uyghur is not an official written language or taught at any levels of education.

For centuries, due to geographical location, Yellow Uyghurs have been isolated from other Turkic languages in China, e.g. Uyghur, Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uzbek, which are predominantly located in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Also due to geographical environment, continuous linguistic interaction and integration with neighboring non-Turkic speaking ethnic groups, the lifestyle of Yellow Uyghurs has gradually changed. Contact influences are evident also in the language of Yellow Uyghurs. The surrounding Chinese, Tibetan, and Mongolian ethnic groups have had a profound influence on the language. The lexicon of Yellow Uyghur has thus been greatly enriched by loanwords from non-Turkic ethnic groups, e.g. Mandarin Chinese, Mongolic, and Amdo Tibetan varieties. Under the influence of Tibetan, Yellow Uyghur has developed syllables with consonant clusters, which are even present in inherited lexical items. Nonetheless, Yellow Uyghur lexicon retains a huge number of archaic forms, e.g. East Old Turkic numerals and counting system; see

Malov (1957), Chen & Lei (1985), Chen (2004, 2009), Clark (1996), Ross (1997, 2000, 2023), Nugteren & Roos (2006), and Zhong (2000, 2009).

According to current Chinese statistics, 99% of children of elementary school age are enrolled in school, however there they have to learn Mandarin Chinese and accept Chinese culture. In the past, most students in the early grades were taught in their own language by their own teachers, and difficult questions were explained in the students' language. However, with an increase in Chinese language proficiency and changes in the teaching force, teachers in the lower grades now generally believe that excessive use of ethnic languages at school will affect students' ability to express themselves in Chinese. Students and parents also believe that decreased use of Yellow Uyghur at home and school is beneficial to academic performance. Therefore, the older generation of the Yellow Uyghurs generally has higher language ability than the younger generation, and vice versa for Chinese fluency (Wang 1999, Miao 2019). The Yellow Uyghur-speaking population is aging, with the number of speakers who learnt it as children declining, resulting in young people having decreased access to their heritage language. The language environment does not provide a place for the use of Yellow Uyghur, so it is decreasingly found in various communicative settings; at universities or working in big cities, there is no opportunity to speak Yellow Uyghur. Although they have a deep affection for the language, it is clear that it is no longer the main communication tool that young generations need to master in their daily lives, so proficiency is very low, and scope of use is very limited. Obviously, exposure to and frequency of use of Chinese is high, and there is a significant tendency to copy from Chinese among the younger generations, meaning that transmission and development of Yellow Uyghur is not favorable for enhancing language vitality.

Annotated texts with audio

The following texts were recorded by one of the authors in Beijing in October 2022. The speaker is Tümen Erjan, a Western Yellow Uyghur teacher in the Department of Chinese literature, Gansu Normal College for Nationalities, Gansu Province. The following presentation of the recorded texts includes the source text in Turcological transcription, grammatical glossing, and a free English translation.

Text 1. *Sariy Yoyurniñ bolis* 'A custom of the Yellow Uyghurs'

LINK: [Yellow Uyghur Audio 1](#)

- | | | | | | |
|----|------------------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1. | <i>Sariy</i> | <i>yoyur</i> | <i>oy-ulus</i> | <i>aq</i> | <i>ay</i> |
| | yellow | Uyghur | area | white | month |
| | <i>gö^hçür-gän</i> | <i>naris</i> | <i>bolis</i> | <i>mınday</i> | <i>dro.</i> |
| | pass-VN | actually | custom | like.this | COP |

'The custom of celebrating White Month in Yellow Uyghurs' homeland is actually like this.'

- | | | | | | | |
|----|--------------|------------------|----------------|------------|----------------|--------------|
| 2. | <i>Sariy</i> | <i>yoyur-niñ</i> | <i>undun</i> | <i>yaq</i> | <i>oy-ulus</i> | <i>nä</i> |
| | Yellow | Uyghur-GEN | eastern | part | area | and |
| | <i>art</i> | <i>yaq-niñ</i> | <i>oy-ulus</i> | <i>söz</i> | <i>birlük</i> | <i>imäs.</i> |
| | western | part-GEN | area | language | same | COP.NEG |

'The language of the eastern and western parts of the Yellow Uyghurs is not the same.'

3. *Da^hgä* *χosi* *la* *sariy* *yoyur* *kisi-lär* *dro.*
still all PTCL Yellow Uyghur person-PL COP
'Nevertheless, they are all Yellow Uyghur people.'
4. *Undun* *yak-dij* *sariy* *yoyur-lar*
eastern part-GEN Yellow Uyghur-PL
aq *ay-ni* *argay* *di-gik* *dro.*
white month-ACC Argay say-HAB COP
'Eastern Yellow Uyghur people call the White Month festival "Argai".'
5. *Art* *jak-dij* *sariy* *yoyur-lar*
western part-GEN Yellow Uyghur-PL
aq *ay-ni* *aq* *ay* *di-gik* *dro.*
white month-ACC white month say-HAB COP
'Western Yellow Uyghur people call White month "Ak ay".'
6. *Düyti* *ä^hrdä-di* *sariy* *yoyur* *aq* *ay-ni*
ancient early-LOC Yellow Uyghur white month-ACC
yäyin-da *gö^hçür-gak* *nimä* *dro.*
summer-LOC pass-HAB something COP
'In ancient times, Yellow Uyghur people celebrated the White month festival also in summer.'
7. *Yäyin-da* *mal-lar* *darla-yan* *u^hgus* *goy* *gu^hşden-ip,*
summer-LOC livestock-PL develop-VN cow sheep get.fat-CONV
sariy *yoyur* *süt* *yay* *çörmä* *kayaq*
Yellow Uyghur milk oil/butter dried-cheese milk.cream
yoyurt-ya *la* *aq* *di-gik* *dro.*
yogurt-DAT PTCL white say-HAB COP
'In the summer the livestock give birth, and the cattle and sheep are fat, so Yellow Uyghurs call milk, oil/butter, dried cheese, milk cream and yogurt "white (food)"'
8. *Yäyin-da* *aq* *ätbä* *yaçši* *düyä,* *malçi-lar* *süt*
summer-LOC white food good time herdsman-PL milk

say-yan dügä di-gik dro.
milk-VN time say-HAB COP

‘Summer is a wonderful season for producing white food. The herdsmen call it the milking season.’

9. *Düyti ährdädi sarıy yoyur aq ay-ni göhçür-sä*
ancient earlier.times Yellow Uyghur white month-ACC pass-HYP
ışkı yiyirmi yıl-niñ kün-dä(n) baş-ı-da-γi tügä-p, bars
twelve year-GEN day-ABL head-POSS3-LOC-REL finish-CONV tiger
kün-dän başda-p doñis kün-dä tüge-p, bäs yiyirmi
day-ABL start-CONV pig day-LOC finish-CONV fifteen
kün-ni göhçür-mis-är nimi dro.
day-ACC pass-NEG.AOR-COP something COP

‘In ancient times, the Yellow Uyghur, when they passed the White month, when the twelve zodiac chronicles ended from the beginning to the end, starting from the day of the tiger and ending on the day of the pig, they did not celebrate the 15th day.’

10. *Sarıy yoyur layue-γa dohķhis di-gik dro.*
Yellow Uyghur lunar.month-DAT nine say-HAB COP
‘Yellow Uyghur people call the Lunar month Nine.’

11. *Dohķhis-niñ ķhara-dohķhis birmä yer-dä Losar ma di-hdi.*
nine-GEN Qara-Nine some place-LOC Losar also say-TERM3SG
kün-dä yay talķan jiozi tul-gän koy äht ät-gik.
day-LOC oil fried.noodle dumpling boil-PN sheep meat make-HAB
‘The Nine is also called “Qara-Nine” (Lit.: black nine) or “Losar” in some places, and they make butter, fried-noodles, fried-fruits, dumpling and cooked-lamb.’

12. *Ahrča bujin oħrsañ sal-yaq buħrķan yahķha*
cypress and/with incense.burner put-HAB Buddha God
ķharmanyi nä tay-γir-yaq nimi dro.
ancestor or sacrifice-CAUS-HAB something COP
‘They burn cypress and incense, offer sacrifice to the Buddha, the God and the ancestor.’

13. *ķhir-ķar öřjü ķhırjın-ķarjın ķara su-ni*
dirtiness thing uncleanness black water-ACC

χosī ta^hs-niŋ k̄hirdiŋ-ka dö^hk-tir-gik.
all outside-GEN rubbish.heap-DAT pour-CAUS-HAB

'They dumped all the dirty things, unclean things, dirty water outside to the garbage heap/dumpster.'

14. *Da^hgi k̄hīr garī-nī čay day-i kü^l bujīn art-yaq nimi*
also dirty bowl-ACC fireside-POSS3 ash with rup-HAB something
dro äm munday bolis yoq bol-īp dro.
COP and like this non.existing be(come)-POST.EVID

'They also had to wipe the dirty bowl with stove ashes (literally: fireside ash), hoping that such a habit would not happen again (literally: such a habit would not exist again).'

15. *Ƙ^haš on yil porīn-da Žiŋyār-dä sarīy yoyur kisi-lār*
many ten year before-LOC Lunar.month-LOC Yellow Uyghur person-PL
χosī bīr-bīr-gä bājälä-gik χosī ulaq min-gä bājälä-gik,
all one.another-DAT visit-HAB all horse ride-CONV visit-HAB
amgī kisi-lār köv-i täryän čogī-yī bar-yaq dī,
now person-PL many-POSS3 car sit-CONV visit-HAB COP
ulaq min-gän kisi-lār pirdtin pīr aza-p dro.
horse ride-VN person-PL more.and.more reduce-POST.EVID

'Decades ago, all Yellow Uyghur people rode horses to visit each other in the first month of the Lunar month, but now most people go by car and fewer and fewer people ride horses to visit/pay (each other) respect.'

16. *Urīy-darīy-iŋ-ya la jama yojiŋ bar-ma-sa, ta^hki*
relative-POSS2-DAT PTCL even.more important go-NEG-HYP also
Ƙ^ha^hƘ^his-yaq, urīy-darīy-iŋ-ya la bar-yan yojin.
be.at.odds-HAB relative-POSS2-DAT PTCL go-VN important

'If you don't go to your relatives' and more important (peoples' house), (they will) be angry/at odds. So it is important to visit the relatives'

17. *Žiŋyār-dä χosī ara^hki al-yaq, bājälä-mä bar-sa, ara^hki*
lunar month-LOC all alcohol take-HAB visit-VN go-HYP alcohol
ī^hč-gik, bīr dun ča iš-gik aq nä sarīy
drink-HAB one NC.TIME tea drink-HAB white or yellow

kümzi yogozi jiaozi tul-gän koy äht yi-gik.
steamed.bun fried.fruit dumpling boil-PN sheep meat eat-HAB

'In Lunar month, (one should) bring alcohol; during New Year's visit one should drink alcohol (literally: when you pay New Year's visit, one should drink alcohol), also drink a cup of tea; and to make yellow or white steamed buns, fried fruits, dumplings, and cooked lamb meat.'

18. *Andan ta^hkhï köv say ma kayir-yak.*
then again many vegetable also stir.fry-HAB

'Then they also prepare many fried dishes.'

19. *Bir yañi-dan başda-gaş la bājälä-gik, bājäläš saq^his*
one new-ABL begin-CONV PTCL visit-HAB visiting eight
yañi ät-gik, saq^his yañi-dan başda-gaş la, q^har
beginning.of.a.month make-HAB eight new-ABL begin-CONV PTCL old
kisi-lär bājälä-gik, bājäläš bäs yigirmä-gä ät-gik, bäs yigirmä
person-PL visit-HAB visiting fifteen-DAT make-HAB fifteen
yo^z-sa la bājälä-mäs.
pass-HYP PTCL visit-NEG.AOR

'New Year's visit starts from the first (new) day and visit lasts until the eighth day from the eighth day, the visit to the elderly is started and it lasts until the fifteenth day of the New Year. Once the 15th day has passed, there is no more New Year's visit.'

Text 2. *Sariy Yoyur namtar* 'Yellow Uyghur legend' (a short fragment)

LINK: [Yellow Uyghur Audio 2](#)

20. *Xosï aytis-ip dro, qar awa-ana-nï yo^z-yir-yin di-p dro.*
all discuss-POST.EVID old parents-ACC pass-CAUS-VOL say-POST.EVID

'(Apparently) all of them discussed and said let's send (away) our old parents (father mother).'

21. *Bir ata-sï yiti oyul duy-ip dro.*
one father-POSS3 seven son give.birth-POST.EVID

'The father has seven sons.'

22. *Yiti oyul aytis-ip dro: awa-ana-nï yö^lir-mi-nï.*
seven son discuss-POST.EVID parents-ACC kill-AN-ACC

'The seven sons discussed killing their parents.'

23. *Ata-si: uzu-ni yöliir-mi-sä tañša di-p (dro).*
 parents self-ACC kill-NEG-HYP idea say-POST.EVID
 ‘The parents said: if they don’t let us die, we will give (them) some advice.’
24. *İrk^ham äd-ip dro, ata-ŋ ana-ŋ-ni irk^ham-ya*
 box make-POST.EVID father-POSS2SG mother-POSS2-ACC box-DAT
šuktä-p dro.
 load-POST.EVID
 ‘They have made a box, put the parents into the box (and carried it).’
25. *Maŋ-o uda-p dro, k^haŋ-ka tor-ip dro.*
 walk-CONV continue-POST.EVID thirsty-DAT suffer-POST.EVID
 ‘They continued walking and got thirsty.’
26. *Anadak^hkanda ata-ŋ ana-ŋ aytis-ip dro: am su*
 then father-POSS2SG mother-POSS2SG say-POST.EVID now water
yok dro.
 non.existing-EVID
 ‘Then, they said to their parents: now we don’t have water.’
27. *Anadak^hkanda ata-si: kus-gä kara di-p dro.*
 thus father-POSS3 cattle-DAT look.IMP say-POST.EVID
 ‘Then the father said: “Look at the cow!”’
28. *Kus-gä kara-p dro, enek dro, dorwak-di k^haz-ip dro.*
 cattle-DAT look-POST.EVID cow.EVID soil-ACC dig-POST.EVID
 ‘(So) they looked at the cow, and the cow was digging the earth.’
29. *Ata-ana-siŋ-ya di-p dro.*
 father-mother-POSS3-DAT say-POST.EVID
 ‘They told their parents.’
30. *Ata-si: ani soq-o yi di-p dro.*
 father-POSS3 that.ACC slaughter-CONV eat say-POST.EVID
 ‘The father said: “Slaughter the cow and eat it!”’

31. *Bir buqa-ni sal di-p dro.*
 one bull-ACC release say-POST.EVID
 ‘The father said: “Release one of the bulls!”’
32. *Buqa-ni sal-yanda, ja^hgirtbaq-din tuw-in-da dorwaq-ni*
 bull-ACC release-CONV iris.lacteal-GEN under-POSS3-LOC soil-ACC
khaz-ip dro.
 dig-POST.EVID
 After having released the bull, the bull was digging the earth under the grass (iris lacteal).’
33. *Ata-si: anda kaz-sa su dro di-p dro.*
 father-POSS3 there dig-HYP water.COP EVID say-POST.EVID
 ‘The father said: “If the bull is digging there, there is water”’.
34. *Su-ni ih^ç-ip dro anda ani man-o uda-p dro.*
 water-ACC drink-POST.EVID there again walk-CONV continue-POST.EVID
 ‘They drank the water and then continued to walk again.’
35. *Bir xay daw-ip dro,*
 one shoe find-POST.EVID
anadak^hkanda ata-sin-ya bar-ip dro.
 thus father-POSS3-DAT give-POST.EVID
 ‘They found a shoe, and they gave it to their father.’
36. *Ata-si xay-ni kara-yaş di-p dro: toli xay-nin*
 father-POSS3 shoe-ACC look-CONV say-POST.EVID circle shoe-GEN
oy-ya gal-ip dro, tor-ya bar-mas bo-p dro.
 steppe-DAT come-POST.EVID hungry-DAT go-NEG.AOR be(come)-POST.EVID
 ‘While looking at the shoe, the father said: we have arrived at the place of short shoe people, we won’t be hungry anymore.’ (Yellow Uyghur used to call Chinese people ‘short-shoe people.’)
37. *Anadak^hkanda mula-lar yirla-p dro: Bar-yini, Bar-yini, balyim*
 thus child-PL sing-POST.EVID go-VOL1PL go-VOL1PL herbal
oy-ya Bar-yini, Yor-yini, Yor-yini, yolyin oy-ya
 steppe-DAT go-VOL walk-VOL walk-VOL red.willow steppe-DAT

dur-yini!

stay-VOL

‘Thus, the children sang: “Let’s go, let’s go to the place where there are rabbits, we walk and walk, walk to the place which has red willow then stay there”.

38.	<i>Anadak^h kanda</i>	<i>ulayliy</i>	<i>kisi</i>	<i>taq-ka</i>	<i>xani-p dro.</i>
	thus	with.livestock	person	mountain-DAT	walk-POST.EVID
	<i>Ulay-i</i>	<i>yok</i>	<i>kisi</i>	<i>min-da</i>	<i>olir-ip dro.</i>
	livestock-POSS3	non.existing	person	there-LOC	live-POST.EVID

The person who has livestock walks to the mountain (and stays there) the person who doesn’t have livestock lives there.’

Grammatical analysis of the text

Phonology

Yellow Uyghur has eight vowels, *a, ä, i, i, o, u, ö, ü*, of which *a, i, o, u* are back and *ä, i, ö, ü* are front.

There are 28 consonants, *b, p, m, d, t, s, z, n, l, r, g, k, x, γ, η, k^h, k, h, f, v, ž, z, č, š, ž, y, tʃ^h, č^h*. Of these, *b, p, g, k^h, ž, č, j, š, f, č^h, h* cannot appear at the end of a syllable (compare Yakup 2022).

Intrasyllabic harmony: Yellow Uyghur observes palatal sound harmony. In certain words, even labial harmony occurs, e.g. *bäjälä-* ‘to visit’, *saq^his* ‘eight’, *ulus* ‘habit’, ‘custom’, *uh^hgus* ‘cow’. Sound harmony is a tendency in suffixes, e.g. *kisi-lär* (person-PL) ‘people’ vs. *malči-lar* (herdsman-PL) ‘herdsmen’, *ät-gik* (make-HAB) ‘X makes’ vs. *al-yaq* (take-HAB) ‘X takes’.

Morphology

Nouns can take plural, possessive, and case markers. The plural marker is {-L³A²r}, e.g. *kisi-lär* (person-PL) ‘people’, *malči-lar* (herdsman-PL) ‘herdsmen’, *o^ht-dar* (grass-PL) ‘grasses’, *kälin-när* (daughter.in.law-PL) ‘daughter-in-laws’. The possessive suffixes are: first person {- (i)m}, second person {- (i)η}, and third person {- (s)i}. Singular and plural are not distinguished, e.g. *ana-m* (mother-POSS1) ‘my/our mother’, *ana-η* (mother-POSS2) ‘your mother’, *ana-si* (mother-POSS3) ‘his/her/their mother’; *boz-im* (body-POSS1) ‘my body’, *boz-iη* (body-POSS2) ‘your body’, *boz-i* (body-POSS3) ‘his/her body’. Yellow Uyghur has five cases: genitive, dative, accusative, locative, and ablative. The genitive suffix is {-N²iη}, e.g. *su-niη* (water-GEN) ‘of the water’, *a^ht-diη* ‘of the horse’. The dative is -GA, e.g. *uriy-dariy-iη-ya* (relative-PL-POSS2-DAT) ‘to your relatives’, *bir-bir-gä* (one another-DAT) ‘to each other’, *yoyurt-ka* (yogurt-DAT) ‘to the yogurt’. The pronominal *η*, which is *n* in most other Turkic varieties, is added between the third-person possessive suffix and dative case, e.g. *ata-siη-ya* (father-POSS3-DAT) ‘to his/her father’, *üy-siη-gä* (house-POSS3-DAT) ‘to his/her house’. It should be noted that *η* only appears between third-person possessive and dative case, in other cases it is *n*, see below. The accusative suffix is {-N²i}, e.g. *Ak ay-ni* (white month-ACC) ‘the White month’, *kün-ni* (day-ACC) ‘the day’, *söz-di* (word-ACC) ‘the word’, *göz-di* (eye-ACC) ‘the eye’. After the third-person possessive, the accusative is {-n}, e.g. *ini-si-n* (younger brother-POSS3-ACC) ‘his/her younger brother’, *k^hiz-i-n* (daughter-POSS3-ACC) ‘his/her daughter’. The locative suffix is {-dA}, e.g. *yäyin-da* (summer-LOC) ‘in the summer’, *kün-dä* (day-LOC) ‘in the day’, *porin-da* (before-LOC) ‘before’. Between the third-person possessive and locative case, pronominal *n* appears, e.g. *art-in-da* (back-POSS3-LOC) ‘in his/her back’, *üy-sin-dä* (house-POSS3-LOC) ‘in his/her house’. The ablative suffix is {-dAn}, e.g. *kün-dän* (day-ABL) ‘from the day’, *yanı-dan* (new-ABL) ‘from the beginning’, *tärgän-*

dän ⟨car-ABL⟩ ‘from the car’. Pronominal *n* appears between the third-person possessive and ablative case, e.g. *ana-sin-dan* ⟨mother-POSS3-ABL⟩ ‘from his/her mother’, *ängä-sin-dän* ⟨sister.in.law-POSS3-ABL⟩ ‘from his/her sister-in-law’.

Voice is expressed by passive, reflexive, causative, and cooperative-reciprocal suffixes. Passives are marked with {- (i)l} or {-ul}, e.g. *but-il-* ⟨complete-PASS⟩ ‘to be completed’, *duht-ul-* ⟨capture-PASS⟩ ‘be captured’. Reflexive suffixes are {-li} or {- (i)n}, e.g. *jar-li-* ⟨crack-REFL⟩ ‘to crack for oneself’, *al-in-* ⟨take-REFL⟩ ‘to take for oneself’, *göse-n-* ⟨chew-REFL⟩ ‘to chew for oneself’. Causative suffixes are {- (i)t}, {-dir/-dur}, {-A²r}, {-I⁴r}, {-yar/-yir/-gir} e.g. *aş-it-* ⟨open-CAUS⟩ ‘to make open’, *azär-t-* ⟨follow-CAUS⟩ ‘to make follow’, *ay-t-* ⟨say-CAUS⟩ ‘to make say’, *yi-dir-* ⟨eat-CAUS⟩ ‘to make eat’, *un-dur-* ⟨go out-CAUS⟩ ‘to make come out’, *iş-är-* ⟨drink-CAUS⟩ ‘to make drink’, *khop-ar-* ⟨get up-CAUS⟩ ‘to make get up’, *duy-ir-* ⟨give birth-CAUS⟩ ‘to make give birth’, *dus-ur-* ⟨come down-CAUS⟩ ‘to make come down’, *göñ-ür-* ⟨move-CAUS⟩ ‘to make move’, *das-yar-* ⟨overflow-CAUS⟩ ‘to make overflow’, *gäl-yir-* ⟨come-CAUS⟩ ‘to make come’, *yät-gir-* ⟨reach-CAUS⟩ ‘to reach’. The cooperative-reciprocal suffix is {- (I)s}, e.g. *gör-is-* ⟨see-REC⟩ ‘to see each other’, *aht-is-* ⟨shoot-REC⟩ ‘to shoot each other’, ‘to fight’ (cf. Chen & Lei 1985: 88–91).

Finite verb forms consist of thematic stems expressing viewpoint-aspect, mood and tense, and no personal markers (see Johanson 2022). The simple terminal marker is {-dl²} denoting an action carried out in the past, e.g. *Gäl-di* ⟨to come-TERM⟩ ‘X came’, *Ḳhara-di* ⟨to look-TERM⟩ ‘X looked’. In-terminal viewpoint aspect can be expressed by {-GAK}/{-gik} for habitual events, e.g. *Bäjälä-gik* ⟨visit-HAB⟩ ‘X visits’, *Al-yak* ⟨take-HAB⟩ ‘X takes’, *Ḳayir-yak* ⟨fry-HAB⟩ ‘X cooks’, *göñür-gik* ⟨pass-HAB⟩ ‘X passes’. The negative aorist form {-mAs} negates general events, e.g. *Bäjälä-mäs* ⟨visit-NEG.AOR⟩ ‘X does not visit habitually’, *Bar-mas* ⟨go-NEG.AOR⟩ ‘X does not go usually’, *Gäl-mäs* ⟨come-NEG.AOR⟩ ‘X does not come habitually’. The low-focal intra-terminal viewpoint-aspect, indicating a present event, is expressed by the form {-G³iš}, e.g. *Mañ-kiš* ⟨walk-INTRA⟩ ‘X will walk/walks’, *Öryan-giš* ⟨learn-INTRA⟩ ‘X will learn/learns’, *Bol-yiš* ⟨be(come)-INTRA⟩ ‘X will become/becomes’. The high-focal intra-terminal viewpoint-aspect, denoting a present progressive event, is expressed with the combination of converb marker {- (i)p} and existential adjective *bar* ‘existing’ or *joḲ* ‘not existing’, e.g. *Ḳi-p bar* ⟨eat-CONV existing⟩ ‘X is eating (right now)’, *Ḳi-p joḲ* ⟨eat-CONV not existing⟩ ‘X is not eating (right now)’, *Ḳayir-ip bar* ⟨fry-CONV existing⟩ ‘X is cooking (right now)’ (cf. Chen 1982: 74). The post-terminal viewpoint-aspect that envisages the action after it has been completed is expressed by post-terminal marker {-GAn}, e.g. *Ḳhara-yan* ⟨look-POST⟩ ‘X has looked at’, *gäl-gän* ⟨come-POST⟩ ‘X has come’.

Evidentiality, hearsay, interference, or perceptive, is expressed by the combination of the converb {- (i)p} and the copula *dro*. Examples: *Yiti oḡul duy-ip dro* ⟨seven son give birth-POST.EVID⟩ ‘X appears to have seven sons’ (S21), *İrkham äd-ip dro* ⟨box make-POST.EVID⟩ ‘They have apparently made a box’ (S24). The negative form of evidentiality is marked by adding {-män//bän} to the verbal stem, e.g. *Bar-män dro* ⟨go-NEG.EVID⟩ ‘X appears not to have gone’. Nominal predicates followed by the copular *dro* can express evidentiality, e.g. *Su joḲ dro* ⟨water not existing.EVID⟩ ‘It appears to have no water’ (S26). According to Lei & Chen (1992: 138), in addition to expressing the lexical meaning of something, thing, *nimä/nimi*, in some contexts, can indicate hearsay or emphasize the inexactness of something. Tuvan and some Sayan Turkic varieties also use a copula *čüβä* ‘thing’, ‘something’, probably a copy from Mongolian (Johanson 2021: 816). For instance, *döyti ährdädi sariḡ yoḡur AḲ ay-ni yäyin-da göñür-gak nimä dro*. ⟨ancient earlier times Yellow Uyghur white month-ACC summer-LOC pass-HAB something COP⟩ ‘In ancient times, the Yellow Uyghur people appeared to celebrate the White month festival also in summer’ (S6). Our second text, which is a Yellow Uyghur ancient legend, is narrated with evidential forms because it is a hearsay.

Yellow Uyghur has three mood markers: hypothetical, voluntative. and optative. The hypothetical mood is expressed with {-sA} lacking personal agreement distinctions, e.g. *Ḳaz-sa* ⟨dig-HYP⟩ ‘if X digs’, *bar-ma-sa* ⟨go-NEG-HYP⟩ ‘if X does not go’. The voluntative moods in the first person plural distinguish between inclusive and exclusive markers, expressing whether or not the addressee is

included (Johanson 2021: 687, Chen & Lei 1985: 105). The exclusive form is {-ä)n//yän//yin}, whereas the inclusive form is {-ä)nī//yānī//yīnī}, e.g. *Yoz-yir-yin* (pass-CAUS-VOL) 'Let's pass (exclusive)', *Dur-yini* (stay-VOL) 'Let's stay (inclusive)'; *bar-än* (go-VOL) 'Let's go (exclusive)', *bar-äni* (go-VOL) 'Let's go (inclusive)'. The optative mood is expressed with the marker {-Gay}, e.g. *Ƙara-yäy* (look-OPT) 'May X look', *dä-yäy* (say-OPT) 'May X say', *Sat-ƙäy* (sell-OPT) 'May X sell'.

Non-finite verbs include verbal nominals and converbs. The post-terminal verbal nominal marker is {-GAN}, *gäl-gän* (come-VN) 'coming', *ät-gän* (make-VN) 'making', *min-gän* (ride-VN) 'riding', *bar-yan* (go-VN) 'going'. The converb markers are {-i)p}, {-G³A²č}, {-i)v//o}, {-y)A}, e.g. *bar-yač* (go-CONV) 'going', *gäl-yač* (come-CONV) 'coming', *yeht-gäč* (reach-CONV) 'reaching', *yi-v* (eat-CONV) 'eating', *maŋ-a* (walk-CONV) 'walking', *diz-o* (write-CONV) 'writing'.

Like most other Turkic languages, the converb markers {-i)p} and {-i)v//o} are multi-functional. They can combine two verbs or clauses serving as a conjunction, functionally equivalent to English *and*, or they can link lexical verbs and postverbs to indicate viewpoint-aspect or actionality. They can also be used in dependent predicates of adverbial clauses. For example, in *Maŋ-o uda-p dro* (walk-CONV continue-POST.EVID), the second verb *uda-* 'to continue' modifies the first verb *maŋ-* 'to walk', which is in the converb form, expressing the meaning 'walk continuously'. Two verbs linked by the converbs {-i)p} and {-i)v//o} can be pluri-predicates, e.g. *sok-o yi* (slaughter-CONV eat) 'slaughter and eat'. The actional phrase consisting of converb-marked lexical verbs and postverbs such as *ät-* 'to do', *yät-* 'to reach', *yaz-* 'to spread', 'to disperse', *ƙal-* 'to stay' can denote various actionality contents, e.g. *Maŋ-a yaz-yan* (walk-CONV AUX-POST) 'X almost/nearly walked'. In this example, the postverb *yaz-* corresponds to Kazakh *ƙazda-* that is a postverb denoting that the action is about to or near to be performed. In Kazakh, however, it has no lexical meaning *per se*. The same verb can be inflected by converbs {-i)v//o} to indicate continuity, and repetition, e.g. *Mula yiyl-o yiyl-o uzu-v ƙa-p dro* (child cry-CONV cry-CONV sleep-CONV STAY.AUX-POST.EVID) 'The child cried and cried itself and completely fell asleep'. The last two examples are taken from Chen & Lei (1985: 110, 117). According to Chen & Lei (1985: 125), the postverbs *ƙida-* 'to be able to' (can) and *yada-* 'not to be able to' (cannot) can be followed by converb marked lexical verb to denote ability, e.g. *Sän ƙarla-v ƙida-yiš mä?* (you sing-CONV can-INTRA Q) 'Can you sing?' *Män alin-ov yada-hdi* (I bring-CONV cannot-TERM) 'I can't take'.

Yellow Uyghur has two copulas, *dro* and *är*, which can be used after nominal and verbal predicates, e.g. *Ulaƙ min-gän ƙäsi-lär pirdtin pür aza-p dro* (horse ride-VN person-PL more and more reduce-POST.EVID) 'the people who ride horse are getting fewer and fewer' (S15), *Sariy yoyur ƙäsi-lär dro* (Yellow Uyghur person-PL COP) 'They are Yellow Uyghur people', *Ni bol-yan är* (what be(come)-VN COP) 'What happened?'. Sometimes *dro* can be realized as *di*, e.g. *Täryän čögi-yi bar-yaƙ di* (car sit-CONV go-HAB COP) 'They go riding car/by car' (S15).

Syntax

Yellow Uyghur shares a number of typological properties with other Turkic languages, for instance, its basic word order is typically SOV. Typical Turkic syntax is left-branching and head-final, although it has lost person-number agreement between subject predicate, e.g. *Xosi la sariy yoyur ƙäsi-lär dro* (all too Yellow Uyghur person-PL COP) 'They are all Yellow Uyghur people' (S3).

Embedded clauses are marked by non-finite verbs forms such as action nominals, participant nominals, and converbs. Verbal relative clauses are expressed with the participant nominal {-GAN}, e.g. *Ulaƙ min-gän ƙäsi-lär* (horse ride-PN person-PL) 'People who ride horse'. Verbless relative clauses can be expressed by the existential copulas *bar* or *yok*, e.g. *ulay-i yok kisi* (livestock-POSS3 existing person) 'a person who has livestock'. Adjectives can be nominal predicates of relative clauses, e.g. *ulayliy kisi* (with livestock person) 'a person who has a livestock'.

Complement clauses can be expressed by the aorist in {-A)r}, action nominals {-MA} or {-GAN} e.g. *Ƙayirmaƙ ƙayir-ar-ni und-up ƙal-yan dro* (barely fry-AOR-ACC forget-CONV STAY.AUX-AN COP) 'X has

forgotten to fry the barley'. *Yiti oyul aytis-ıp dro awa-ana-ni yöliir-mi-ni* (seven son discuss-POST.EVID parents-ACC kill-AN-ACC) 'The seven-son discussed killing their parents' (S22). In this example, the complement clause *awa-ana-ni yöliir-mi-ni* 'killing the parents' comes after the main predicate *Aytis-ıp dro* 'They have apparently discussed'. Complement clauses normally occupy a position preceding the main predicate, as in *Yörgän-gän-i yaxşı dro* (learn-AN-POSS3 good COP) 'X's study is very good.'

Adverbial clauses are mainly expressed by various converb markers such as {-GAČ}, {-(i)p}, {-GAnDA}, {-sA}. Simultaneity, where two actions in adverbial and main clauses are carried out simultaneously, can be expressed with the converbs {-GAČ} or {-GAnDA}, e.g. *Ulaq min-gä bājälä-gik* (horse ride-CONV visit-HAB) 'They use to come by horse', *Bir kün-gä jēht-gändä* (one day-DAT reach-CONV) 'when the day arrives', *Buqa-ni sal-γanda* (bull-ACC release-CONV) 'when release the bull' (S32). Immediate anteriority, in which the action described in the main clause occurs immediately after the action described in the adverbial clause can be marked by the combination of the hypothetical marker {-sA} and the particle *la*, e.g. *Bäs yigirmä yoz-sa la* (fifteen pass-HYP PTCL) 'as soon as the 15th day has passed' (S19). Hypothetical clauses are expressed by the hypothetical marker {-sA}, e.g. *Uzu-ni yöliir-mi-sä* (self-ACC kill-NEG-HYP3) 'if they don't kill him' (S23), *Anda qaz-sa su dro* (there dig-HYP3 water COP) 'if they dig there, water will come out' (S33). Concessive clauses can be expressed by the combination of hypothetical marker {-sA} and the particle *ma*, e.g. *Gol käčik-räk bol-sa ma, yörgän-gän-i yaxşı dro* (X little-COMP be(come)-HYP3 PTCL learn-VN-POSS3 good COP) 'Although X is young, X studies very well' (Chen & Lei 1985: 154).

Indirective speech can be expressed by adding *dip dro* (say-POST.EVID) 'saying' after the direct speech, e.g. *Bir buqa-ni sal di-p dro* (one bull-ACC release say-POST.EVID) 'It said: release one bull', *Qar awa-ana-ni yoz-yir-yin di-p dro* (old parents-ACC pass-CAUS-VOL1-say-POST.EVID) 'It said: let's send the old parents'.

Lexicon

Yellow Uyghur exhibits strong Chinese, Mongolian, and Tibetan influences, e.g. *yöjñ* ← Chinese *yào jǐn* 'important', *yüvin* ← Chinese *yǔ wén* 'literature', *šüešo* ← Chinese *xuéxiào* 'school', *tärgän* ← Mongolian *tärgän* 'car', *gäräl* ← Mongolian *gäräl* 'light', *Ohrsaṅ* ← Tibetan *bsaṅs* 'incense burner', *šat* ← Tibetan *šad* 'three-year-old yak' (cf. Roos 2000; Chen 1982, 2009). Meanwhile, Yellow Uyghur preserves a lot of Old Turkic words that are the core part of its vocabulary, including its counting system.

Aq ay is selective copying of Mongolian *Cagan Sar* 'White Moon'. It is the Mongolian Lunar New Year, the first day of the year according to the Mongolian lunisolar calendar (S1).

Balyim Chinese 西河柳 Xīhéliú Liu commonly known as Chinese Tamarisk Twing, a special plant used in medicine (S37).

Bājälä- 'to extend New Year greetings', 'to pay a visit' is copied from Chinese 拜年 *bàinián* (S15).

ǰa^hgirtbaq iris lacteal is a plant with showy flowers, typically purple and yellow, and sword-shaped leaves (S22).

Layue is a Chinese loanword 腊月 (Làyuè) for twelfth month of the lunar year (S10).

Losar Tibetan *lo-sar* 'new year', known as Tibetan New Year, is a festival in Tibetan Buddhism (S 11).

Ohrsaṅ 'incense burner'. The Tibetan loanword *bsaṅs* means "burning of incense as a sacrifice to deities or ancestors; burning white mulberry (burning cypress, tsampa, or butter as a sign of respect deities)" Roos (2000: 329–330) (S12).

Toli qayniñ oyī 'a place of short-shoe people'. The expression refers to a place where Chinese people live, that is, farming places, where there is food (S36).

Yojñ is a Chinese loanword 要紧(yàojǐn) ‘important’, ‘urgent’ (S16).

Dun Chinese is numeral classifier 顿(dùn) ‘time’, e.g. Yī dùn chá (a/one NL:TIME tea) ‘a cup of tea’ (S17).

Yoz- It is said that in ancient times, when old people were brought to fight in wars, they were inevitably killed, so the word *yozyir* ‘to let pass’ here means ‘to let the old people kill themselves’ (S20).

Žij yār is a Chinese loanword 正月(zhēngyuè) ‘first month of the lunar year’ (S15).

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