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**Title:** Grammaticalization paths and indexical content

**Abstract:** The existence of grammaticalization paths in a number of diverse semantic domains suggests that linguistic grammars evolves along predictable trajectories. There are several questions raised by such systematic changes in the patterning of forms with respect to meaning. In this talk, I begin to address one specific question:

*Are there particular semantic properties that might characterize the diverse meanings that participate in any semantic grammaticalization path?*

My tentative answer to this question goes thus: Examining a range of grammaticalization trajectories, one observes that elements on the left edge of such trajectories often involve a specific type of context-dependent content — discretionary indexicality. It is possible to interpret the emergence and spread of grammatical forms across multiple domains as correlating with the presence/loss of such content. If this identified meta-property indeed characterizes the unfolding of grammaticalization paths, it allows us to further deconstruct the structure of such trajectorial changes.