

Indefinite Articles in the Modern Uzbek and their usage in specific contexts

Alexei Chibakov (Abstract)

The modern Uzbek has two indefinite articles - bir and bitta. While bir is older, bitta has gradually developed in recent times. The semantic and pragmatic difference between them has not yet been analyzed, however there is reason to believe that there is a conventional difference between these articles since in some cases only the one or the other can be used depending on the semantic features of the nouns or the contextual information. In this talk a first attempt for an empirical analysis is presented.

In a first questionnaire study it was found that NPs denoting humans can have both articles, while other NPs may have either only bitta or only bir. In a second questionnaire study standard semantic/pragmatic tests regarding specificity (interaction with quantifiers, speaker identifiability etc.) have been applied showing that there is a tendency to interpret bitta as specific in intensional contexts.