

## The origin of German *werden* + infinitive future – an alternative scenario

Donnerstag,  
05.03.2020  
09:30–10:00  
ESA1 O 122

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Besides the use of futurate present, German has in the course of its history developed periphrastic future forms with auxiliaries based on modals (notably *sollen* 'have to/shall' and *wollen* 'want to') and on the inchoative/ingressive copula *werden* 'to become', the latter ousting modal-based futures since the 16th century starting from East Central and/or Upper German. While this diachronic development has been well-described (Bogner 1994 among others), the origin of the future periphrasis *werden* + infinitive is still under debate. This specifically concerns the question of how the infinitive came to be used with *werden*. Previous hypotheses include phonetic reduction (loss of final -d(e) of the present participle), syntactic analogy (based on *beginnen* 'to begin' + infinitive or on modal-based futures) and syntactic borrowing (calque of Slavic *budu*-future), for an overview see Westvik (2000), Harm (2001), and Fleischer & Schallert (2011). However, none of these hypotheses is fully uncontroversial so that the issue remains largely unresolved.

In this talk, an alternative scenario of the origin of *werden* + infinitive is explored that is based on reanalysis. It links the development crucially to specific syntactic (notably argument-structural), morpho-phonological and aspectual properties of the respective main verb forms that allowed for the relevant type of reanalysis. This alternative scenario thus makes specific predictions regarding the kind of verbs that occurred in this construction first, which are discussed against the background of historical German corpus data. Furthermore, it is argued that the suggested link to aspectual marking of the main verb offers a potential explanation both of the timeline of the development as well as of its areal spread.

**References:** Bogner, S. (1994). Periphrastische Futurformen im Frühneuhochdeutschen. Wien: Edition Praesens. Fleischer, J. & O. Schallert (2011). Historische Syntax des Deutschen. Tübingen: Narr. Harm, V. (2001). Zur Herausbildung der deutschen Futurumschreibung mit *werden* + Infinitiv. *Zeitschrift für Dialektologie und Linguistik* 68, 288–307. Westvik, O. J. (2000). Über Herkunft und Geschichte des *werden*-Futurs. Eine Auseinandersetzung mit neuerer und neuester Forschung. In Richter, G. et al. (eds.), *Raum, Zeit, Medium – Sprache und ihre Determinanten*. Festschrift für Hans Ramge zum 60. Geburtstag. Darmstadt: Hessische Historische Kommission, 235–261.

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