

How I have become a linguist

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Since Oktober 2016 I have been a research assistant (*Akademischer Rat*) at the *Institut für deutsche Sprache und Literatur I: Abteilung für Sprachwissenschaft* led by Klaus von Heusinger at the University of Cologne. Before I joined the department in Cologne, I studied German philology in Zielona Góra (Poland), Bremen and Dresden (both in Germany). It was in Bremen in 2006 when I realized that linguistics is what I would like to do. There I attended my first conference, the 39th Annual Meeting of the Societas Linguistica Euorpaea organized by the research group of Thomas Stolz. In October 2008, I started studying *European Languages: Structures and Use* with a focus on Germanic languages. I did a lot of contrastive linguistics, kept improving my Dutch, English and German skills, and started learning new languages (in particular, European Portuguese and Swedish). Guido Mensching was the first who taught me, mainly based on Romance languages, how the Minimalist Program works and I enjoyed his courses very much! My MA thesis was supervised by Matthias Hüning (Department of Dutch) and Ekkehard König (Department of English) and it was on modal verbs that take an epistemic modal base and occur in non-finite forms, either as an infinitive or as a participle. I was done with my MA study rather quickly; in May 2010 I submitted my thesis and obtained a scholarship from the Dutch Language Union to spend a couple of weeks in the Netherlands to practice my Dutch. My entire MA study was sponsored by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). After this period the question arose: What should I do next? I applied for two PhD positions, one at the LMU in Munich and the other at the Center for General Linguistics (ZAS) in Berlin. Jakob Maché persuaded me to enroll at the ZAS, which is one of the best places in the whole world to do formal linguistics. I learned a phenomenal amount from my ZAS colleagues! In September 2010, I joined a research group known as PB3 on the Lexical conditioning of syntactic structures - clause-embedding predicates led by Barbara Stiebels. Barbara was a person who showed me how fascinating lexical semantics of clause-embedding verbs can be and to what extent it can have an impact on the syntax of

complement clauses. I'm still very much into this! I left ZAS in August 2013 to gather teaching experience and to familiarize myself more with matters of university administration in general. I was offered two jobs, one in Stuttgart and another in Potsdam. I decided to take the position in Potsdam and defended my PhD thesis *Subject to Subject Raising Verbs in German. Their Origin, Development and Complements* in December 2015. One of my PhD supervisors was Elly van Gelderen from the Arizona State University, where I spent a couple of days in May 2014 discussing cycles in German. In July 2016 I was offered a job as *Akademischer Rat*, both in Cologne and Bochum. I am currently based in Cologne and work in particular on adverbial clauses. Just drop by and say *hello!* The team I'm associated with looks forward to meeting you, too.



Figure 1: Working group of Klaus von Heusinger, University of Cologne, October 2018