Theses of the dissertation

Subject-to-Subject Raising Verbs in German. Their Origin, Development and Complements

(Original title: *Subjektanhebungsverben im Deutschen. Ihre Entstehung, Entwicklung und Komplemente*)

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1. Introduction to the topic

In Present-day German there are approximately 1700 predicates selecting complement clauses. The complement clauses, in turn, can have a different shape. Depending on semantic properties of the clause-embedding predicate, they can occur as questions, finite *that*-clauses, infinitive clauses and so forth.

The major objective of the present PhD thesis has been to investigate when and in which structural environments selected matrix predicates started licensing infinitive complements. The main focus has been on three subject-to-subject raising verbs: *beginnen* 'begin', *versprechen* 'promise' and *brauchen* 'need', as the following examples illustrate:

(1) *Als   es stark   zu regnen   begann, ...*
    when   it   strong   to   rain.INF   began.3SG.PST
    'When it started raining strongly, ... '
    (DeReKo, *Braunschweiger Zeitung*, 20/6/2007)

(2) *Es   versprach   zu   schneien.*
    it   promise.3SG.PST   to   snow.INF
    'It promised to snow.'
    (Wurmbrand 2001: 169; ex 126i)

(3) *Es   braucht   nicht   zu   regnen.*
    it   need.3SG   NEG   to   rain.INF
    'It need not rain.'
    (Ulvestad 1997: 228)

The matrix predicates used in the examples given in (1)-(3) have one main property in common: They do not license their own subjects, to which they could assign a thematic role. However, as the matrix subject position must be filled, an argument from the dependent clause has to be raised up to the matrix clause (= subject-to-subject raising). In other words, I assume *es* 'it' in the examples given above to be base-generated in infinitive clauses and then to be A-moved into the matrix subject position.

In this context, the question arises whether *beginnen*, *versprechen* and *brauchen* as subject-to-subject raising verbs emerged under the same conditions. At first glance this question seems redundant, since all three predicates share one syntactic property: They allow subject raising from the embedded clause. Additionally, Traugott (1997, 2010) assumes all subject-to-subject raising predicates to have undergone a grammaticalization process.

Although in Present-day German all subject-to-subject raising predicates can be brought down to a common syntactic denominator, it has been shown in the present PhD thesis that subject-to-subject raising verbs emerge in different structural environments and that diachronically they cannot be treated in a unified way.

2. Theses

I. Usually, it has been assumed in the literature that subject-to-subject raising predicates undergo a grammaticalization process and that they develop from subject control predicates (cf. Traugott 1997, 2010). In contrast, it is argued that (i) *beginnen* 'begin' as a subject-to-subject raising verb never grammaticalized, (ii) *versprechen* 'promise' and *brauchen* 'need' grammaticalized into functional heads and acquired the status of subject-to-subject raising verbs. However, their subject raising status is due to DP complements, and not due to a subject control structure.

II. It was possible in Old High German (750-1050) to raise the subject from the embedded clause into the matrix subject position, crossing a CP boundary (= hyper-raising) and leaving a pronominal A-copy in the dependent clause (= copy-raising) (cf. Ademola-Adeoye 2011 for a cross-linguistic overview of finite raising constructions).

III. It is claimed that *beginnen* 'begin' occurring with the correlate *damit* ought to be analyzed as a subject control verb and that this pattern instantiates a recent development in the history of German:

(4) *Vor   sechs   Jahren   hat   er$_i$ damit   begonnen,*
     for   six   years   have.3SG   he   COR   begin.PTCP

     [PRO$_i$ *die   Fassade   weihnachtlich   zu   schmücken*]
          the   facade   Christmas   to   decorate.INF

     'He started decorating the facade with Christmas ornaments six years ago' (DeReKo, *Mannheimer Morgen*, 10/12/2011)

IV. The subject-to-subject raising use of *versprechen* 'promise' emerged out of the pattern *versprechen* + DP, and not out of a control infinitive. Moreover, *versprechen* is competing with and suppressing *verheißen* 'promise':

(5) *Das   Turnier* (...) *verheiß   spannend   zu   werden*
     the   tournament   promise.3SG.PST exciting   to   become.INF
     'The tournament promised to be exciting'
     (DeReKo, *Rhein-Zeitung*, 24/6/2010)

V. Based on Reis (2001, 2005) and Wurmbrand (1999), it is assumed that *brauchen* as a modal verb and, simultaneously, as a negative polarity item acquired the status of a subject-to-subject raising predicate. In addition, it is argued that *dürfen*, *bedürfen* and *brauchen* constitute a verbal NPI linguistic cycle in the sense claimed by van Gelderen (2009, 2011).

3. Abbreviations

1/2/3 - 1st/2nd/3rd person, COR - correlate, INF - infinitive, NEG - negation, PST - past tense, PTCP - participle perfect, SG - singular.

4. References

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