On the *Promise* Cycle in the History of German

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Diachronic Generative Syntax 15

University of Ottawa, August 1-3, 2013

What is this talk about?

In Present-day German *versprechen* ('promise') can be employed in two different ways:

[1a] *Ich*   *verspreche*   *Ihnen,*   [INF *heute*   *freundlich*   *zu*   *sein*]

     I   promise.1SG you.DAT   today nice   to be.INF

     'I promise you to be nice today.' (IDS, *Braunschweiger Zeitung,* 14/9/2005)

[1b] *Der*   *Machthaber*   *verspricht*   [NP *Reformen*]

     the   power.holder promise.3SG   reforms

     'The strongman promises reforms.' (IDS, *Nürnberger Nachrichten,* 11/1/2012)

[2a] *Das*   *Buch*   *verspricht*   [INF *ein*   *Erfolg*   *zu*   *werden*]

     the   book promise.3SG   a success to become.INF

     'The book promises to be a success.' (IDS, *Mannheimer Morgen,* 7/8/2004)

[2b] *Das*   *Wetter*   *verspricht*   [NP *schnelles*   *Winterende*]

     the   weather promise.3SG quick   winter.end

     'The weather promises a quick winter's end.'
     (IDS, *Burgenländische Volkszeitung,* 1/3/2012)

lexical

functional

Drohen ('threaten') behaves in a similar way:

[3a] *Er* *drohte* *der* *Frau,* *ihrem* *Kleinkind*
he threaten.3SG.PST the woman.DAT her small.child.DAT

auf *dem* *Beifahrersitz* *etwas* *anzutun.*
on the passenger.seat somethin to.do.INF

'He threatened the woman to do violence to her small child sitting on the passenger seat.' (IDS, *St. Galler Tagblatt,* 26/3/1999)

[3b] *Ein* *Haus* *droht* *einzustürzen.*
a house threaten.3SG to.collapse.INF

'A house threatens to collapse.'
(IDS, *Niederösterreichische Nachrichten,* 6/5/2008)

Why should *promise* and *threaten* be analyzed separately?

In some languages, only one of the two predicates grammaticalized. Polish, for example, belongs to this group.

Whereas *grozić* ('threaten') can be used both lexically (cf. 4a) and functionally (cf. 4b), *obiecać* ('promise') is restricted only to the lexical usage (5a vs. 5b):

[4a] *Grozili*   *jej*   *wyrzuceniem*   *z*   *pracy* | lexical |

threaten.VIR.*l*-PTCP   her.DAT   firing.INS   from   work.GEN

'They threatened her to fire her.' (NKJP, *Dziennik Zachodni,* 12/7/2008)

[4b]   *Wiele*   *budynków*   *grozi*   *zawaleniem* | functional |

many   buildings   threaten.3SG   collapsing.INS

'Many buildings threaten to collapse.' (NKJP, *Dziennik Zachodni,* 17/8/2002)

[5a]   *Urzędnik*   *obiecał*   *zająć*   *się*   *sprawą* | lexical |

office.worker   promise.3SG.M.*l*-PTCP   look.after.INF   REFL   issue.GEN

'The office worker promised to look after this issue.'
(NKJP, *Mazowieckie To i Owo,* 9/6/2009)

[5b]   *Ta   *książka*   *obiecuje*   *stać*   *się*   *sukcesem* | functional |

this   book   promise.3SG   become.INF   REFL   success.INS

Intended: 'This book promises to be a success.'

A cross-linguistic overview

Language	Predicates		References
German	+ (*versprechen*)	+ (*drohen*)	Askedal (1997), Colomo (2011), Diewald & Smirnova (2010, 2011), Eisenberg (2004), Gunkel (2000), Heine & Miyashita (2004, 2007), Kiss (2005), Klein (2009), Kokutani (2004), Maché (2013), Reis (2005, 2007), Wurmbrand (2001), Zifonun et al. (1997)
English	+ (*promise*)	+ (*threaten*)	Langacker (1995), Traugott (1993, 1997)
French	+ (*promettre*)	+ (*menacer*)	Heine & Kuteva (2006), Rooryck (2001), Ruwet (1991)
Spanish	+ (*prometer*)	+ (*amenazar*)	Cornillie (2005, 2007)
Dutch	+ (*beloven*)	+ (*dreigen*)	Rooryck (2001), Verhagen (1995, 2000, 2006)
Swedish	-	-	Björn Bergek (p. c.)
Icelandic	-	-	Jóhanna Barðdal (p. c.)
Ukrainian	-	-	Heine & Kuteva (2006), Ulyana Senyuk (p. c.)
Norwegian	? (*love*)	+ (*true*)	Eide (2005), Krstin Eide (p. c.)
Polish	-	+ (*grozić*)	Lubańska (2010)

Roadmap

1. Introduction

2. Lexical vs. functional *versprechen*
   a) imperatives
   b) dative arguments
   c) control shift
   d) emebdded complements
   e) extraposition vs. intraposition

3. Functional *promise* as Asp°

4. The lost of the movement from V to Asp

5. The *promise* cycle in the History of German

6. Concluding remarks

Lexical *versprechen*
vs.
functional *versprechen*

What makes them different?

Based on Askedal (1997), Colomo (2011), Heine & Miyashita (2008), Reis (2005, 2007).

(i) In contrast to lexical *versprechen* (= *versprechen*1), functional *versprechen* (= *versprechen*2) cannot occur in imperative forms:

[6a] *Versprich*   *mir*   [NP *etwas*],   *Titus Annius*

promise.2SG.IMP   me.DAT   something   T. A.

'Promise me something, Titus Annius.'
(IDS, Hannoversche Allgemeine, 7/2/2009)

[6b] *Versprich*   *mir,*   [INF *ihm*   *das*   *Fliegen*   *beizubringen*]

promise.2SG.IMP   me.DAT   him.DAT the   flying   to.teach.INF

'Promise me to teach him how to fly.'
(IDS, *Mannheimer Morgen*, 3/11/2011)

[6c] **Oh, du* *furchtbares*   *Wetter,*   *versprich*   [NP *eine*   *reiche*   *Ernte*]

oh, you   terrible   weather   promise.2SG.IMP   a   rich   harvest

Intended: 'Oh, you terrible weather, promise a rich harvest.'

[6d] **Oh, du* *furchtbares*   *Wetter,*   *versprich*   [INF *schön* *zu*   *werden*]

oh, you   terrible   weather   promise.2SG.IMP   nice   to   become.INF

Intended: 'Oh, you terrible weather, promise to be nice.'

(ii) Whereas *versprechen*1 can license a DAT argument, *versprechen*2 cannot:

[7a] *Ich* *verspreche* *Ihnen,* [INF *heute* *freundlich* *zu* *sein*]

I promise.1SG you.DAT today nice to be.INF

'I promise you to be nice today.'
(IDS, *Braunschweiger Zeitung,* 14/9/2005)

[7b] *Das* *Buch* *verspricht* **uns* [INF *ein* *Erfolg* *zu* *werden*]

the book promise.3SG us.DAT a success to become.INF

'The book promises to be a success.'
(IDS, *Mannheimer Morgen,* 7/8/2004)

As far as DP complements are concerned, the situation appears more complex:

[7c] *Radikale   Tierschützer   versprechen   [*DAT *uns*]   *einen   Ausweg*
     radical   animnal.welfarists promise.3PL   us   a   way.out
     'Radical animal welfarists promise us a way out.'
     (IDS, *St. Galler Tagblatt*, 30/6/2009)

[7d] *Allerdings   versprechen   die   Touristen (...)   [*DAT *eventuellen   Räubern*]
     however   promise.3PL   the   tourists   potential   robbers

     häufig   keine   große   Beute
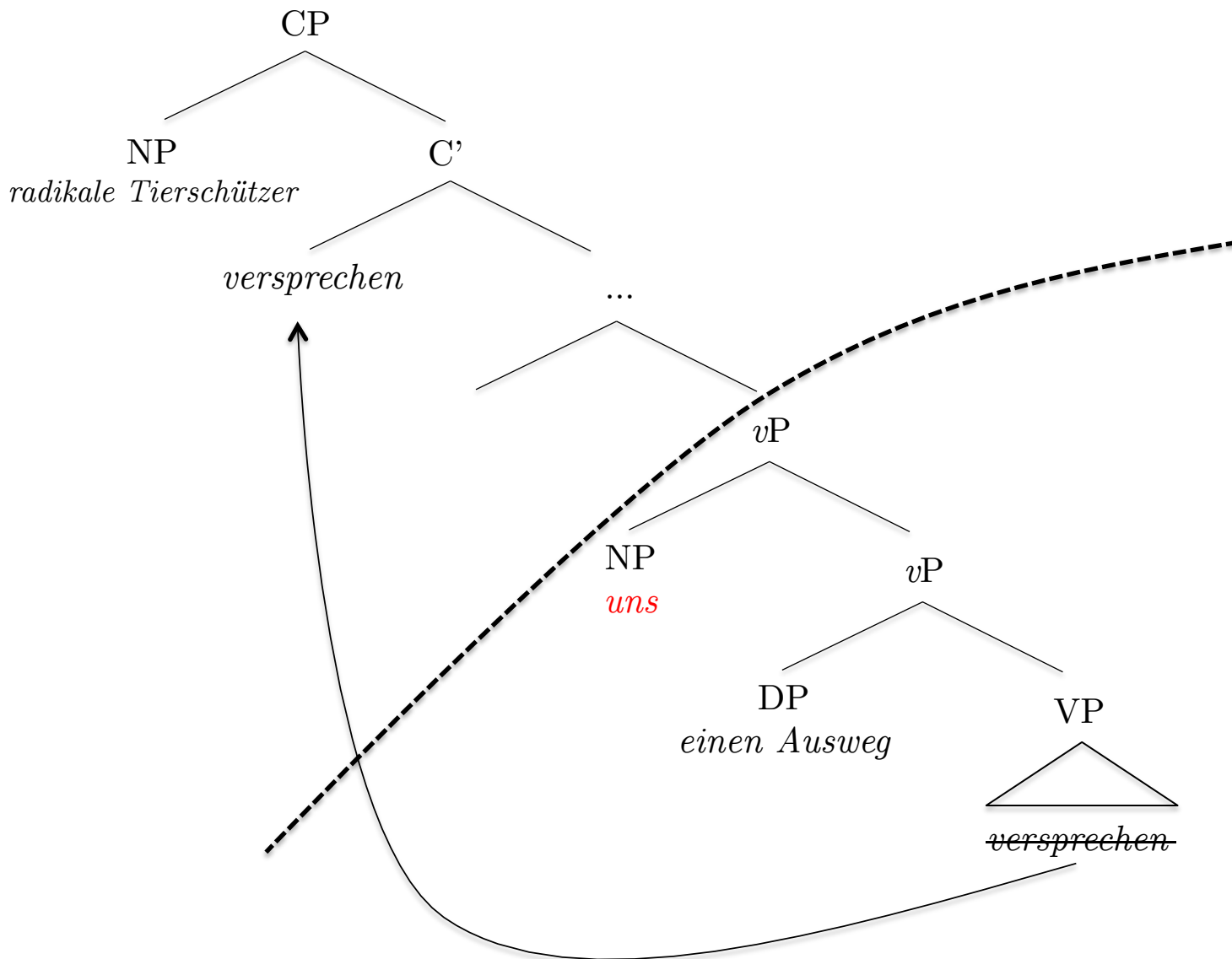   often   no   big   booty
     However, the tourists often don't promise any big booties to potential
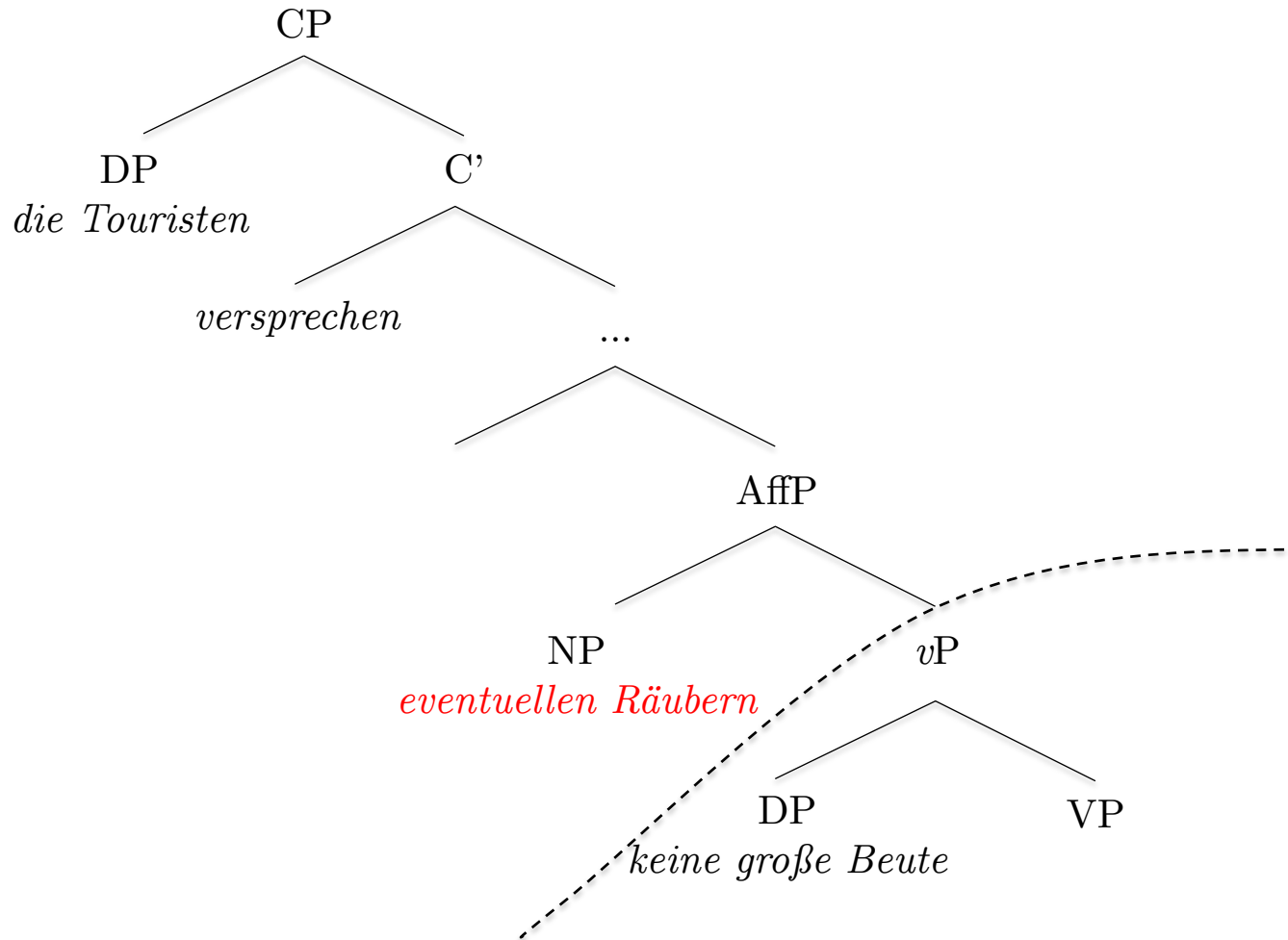   robbers.' (Colomo 2011: 316; ex 487a)

In (7c), the dative argument *uns* ('us') is licensed by *versprechen*1:

CP
├── NP
│   *radikale Tierschützer*
└── C'
    ├── *versprechen*
    └── ...
        └── *v*P
            ├── NP
            │   *uns*
            └── *v*P
                ├── DP
                │   *einen Ausweg*
                └── VP
                    versprechen

In (7d) in turn, the dative argument *eventuellen Räubern* ('potential robbers') does not come from *versprechen*2. According to Hole (2006, 2008), it is an 'extra argument' and it should be associated with an AffP:

(iii) If *versprechen*2 does not license the dative argument, it also does not allow for any control shift, whereas *versrprechen*1 does:

[8a] *Ihr*   *wurde*   *versprochen*, *tanzen*   *zu*   *dürfen*

her.DAT   PASS.AUX.3SG.PST   promise.PTCP   dance.INF   to   may.INF

'She was promised to be allowed to dance.'

[8b] **Dem*   *Wetter*   *wurde*   *versprochen*, *schön*   *werden*   *zu*   *dürfen*

the   weather   PASS.AUX.3SG.PST   promise.PTCP   nice   become.INF   to   may.INF

Intended: 'The weather was promised to be allowed to be nice.'

(iv) *Versprechen*1 can embed indirect speech complements, whilst *versprechen*2 cannot:

[9a] *Die*   *Frau*   *hatte*   *ihr*   *versprochen,*
    the   woman   had.3SG   her.DAT   promise.PTCP

    [*sie*   *werde*   *dank*   *der*   *Behandlung*   *ihr*   *Glück*   *finden*]
    she   will.3SG   due   the   treatment   her   happiness find.INF

    'The woman promised her that she will find her happiness due to the treatment.' (IDS, *St. Galler Tagesblatt*, 6/9/2000)

[9b] *[Das   Wetter]ᵢ   *verspricht,*   [es]ᵢ   *werde*   *schön*
    the   weather   promise.3SG   it   become.3SG.SUBJ   nice

    Intended: 'The weather promises that it will be nice.'

(v) In contrast to *versprechen*1, *versprechen*2 does not allow for extraposition of embedded infinitival complements:

[10a] *weil*　　　*ich*　*Ihnen*　　[*verspreche*], [*heute freundlich zu sein*]
　　　because I　　you.DAT promise.1SG today nice　　　to be.INF
　　　'Because I promise you to be nice today.'

[10b] *weil ich Ihnen heute freundlich* [z*u sein verspreche*]

[10c] ?*weil*　　　*das*　*Wetter*　[*verspricht*]　[*endlich mal schön zu werden*]
　　　because the　　weather promise.3SG finally　　MP　nice　　to become.INF
　　　Intended: 'Because the weather promises to be nice, finally.'

[10d] *weil das Wetter endlich mal schön* [*zu werden vesrpricht*]

Interim summary
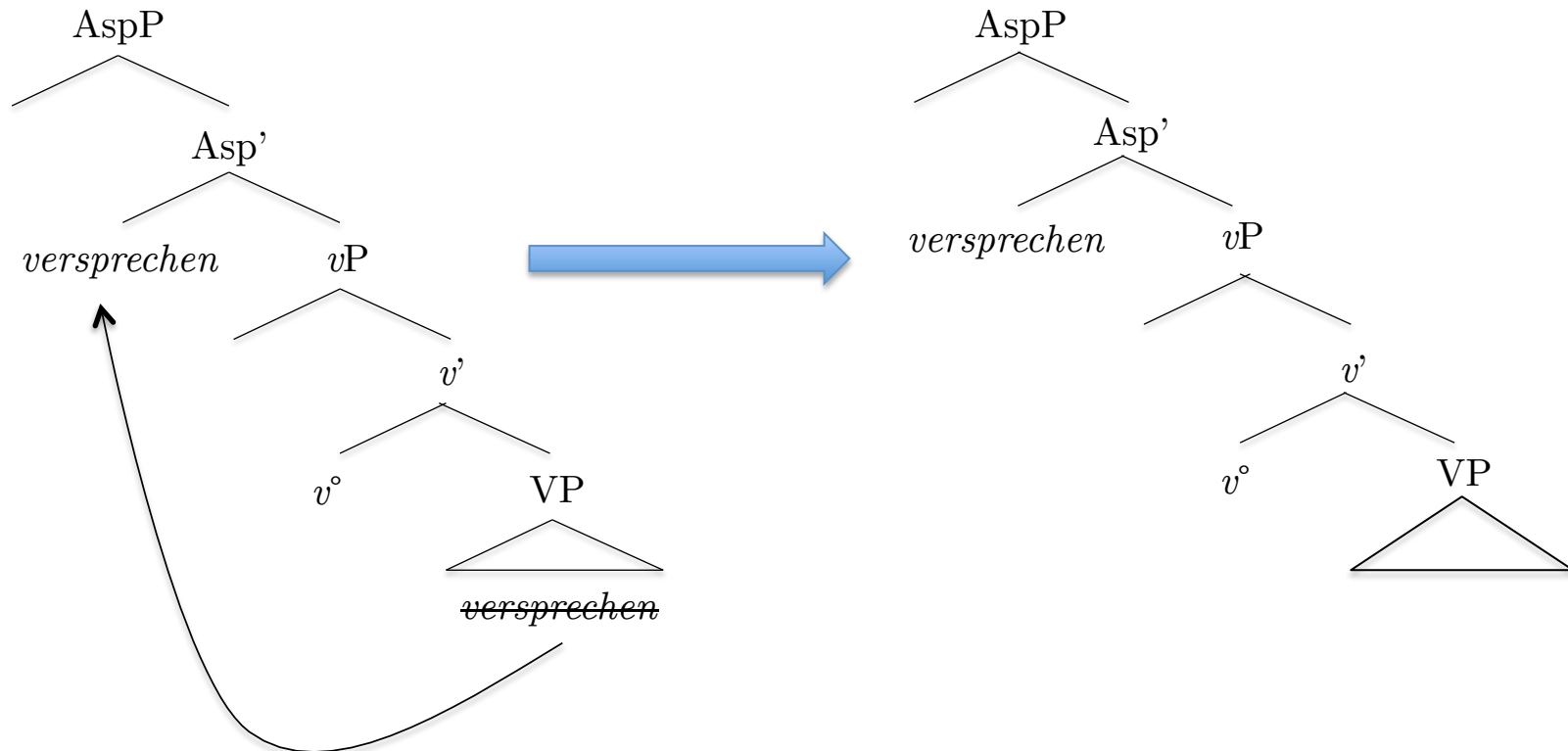
In comparison to *versprechen*1, *versprechen*2 appears in several respects 'defective':

	lexical *versprechen* (*versprechen*1)	functional *versprechen* (*versprechen*2)
1. imperative form	+	-
2. dative argument	+	-
3. control shift	+	-
4. indirect speech complements	+	-
5. extraposition	+	-

Table 1: Selected differences between lexical and functional use of *versprechen*

Basic assumptions

- funtcional *versprechen* is an aspectual head,

- all aspectual heads are functional heads (cf. Fukuda 2012),

- functional *versprechen* externally merges as Asp°,

- *versprechen* underwent a grammaticalization process:

[2a]   *Das   Buch   verspricht*   [_{INF} *ein   Erfolg   zu   werden*]

      the   book   promise.3SG   a   success   to   become.INF

      'The book promises to be a success.' (IDS, *Mannheimer Morgen*, 7/8/2004)

das Buch wird Erfolg = 1

$ASP(\varphi)$ is true at a pair of an interval i and a world w iff for some interval i' which includes i as a non-final subinterval and for all interia worlds $w' \in INR$ $(<i, w>)$, φ is true at $<i',w'>$ (Dowty 1977).

[11]   *The rains are destroying the crops, but perhaps they will stop before the crops are destroyed.* (Dowty 1977: 46)

This is also in concord with Traugott (1993: 355) who claims that functional *promise* in English is not compatible with the progressive tense forms.

"Like other raising verbs, e.g. *seem*, and modals, raising *promise* cannot coocur with progressive aspect:

[12a]   *Marianne is promising to be a good president*   (locutionary)

[12b]   *Marianne promises to be a good president*   (epistemic)".

When did
the movement from V to Asp
get lost?

Reanalysis

far-/furi-/fer-/fir-/faur-/fair-/fra- + sprechen/sprechan/sprë(c)han

speak for	disallow	...	deny	protect	to defend oneself

a) Adelung (1808): *Ehedem gebraucht man dafür* verheißen, *welches aber außer der höhern Schreibart veraltet ist, seitdem* versprechen *in dieser Bedeutung üblicher geworden ist*;

b) Grimm & Grimm (1956: 1448ff.) do not provide any examples from OHG in which *versprechen* could be translated as 'promise' (19 pages on *versprechen*);

c) Leopold (1977: 65) paraphrases *versprechen* as *geloben* ('promise'), but he doesn't provide any examples illustrating this use.

[13a] *sprechen für* ('speak for'):

Thie	*bískofa*	*zi*	*nóti*	*firspráchun*	*tho*	*thie*	*líuti*
the	bishops	to	Not	promise.3PL.PST	then	the	people.ACC

'The bishops spoke for the people if necessary.' (OtfE IV, 24:19)

[13b] *verbieten* ('disallow'):

Tho	*drúhtin*	*themo*	*mán*	*luag,*	*thes*	*ih*	*hiar*	*óbana*	*giwúag*
then	God	the	man.DAT	.3SG	the	I	hier	above	mention.1SG.PST

óbaz	*theih*	*hiar*	*fóra*	*quad,*	*thaz*	*er*	*mo*	*hárto*	*firspráh*
fruits	that.I	hier	before	say.3SG.PST	that	he	him.DAT	very	promise.3SG.PST

'Then, the God disallowed the man whom I mentioned above to eat the fruits to which I'm referring here; he disallowed it very clearly.' (OtfE II, 6: 3-4)

[13c] *sich verteidigen* ('defend oneself'):

Fraget	*ínan*	*es*	*in*	*wár;*	*er*	*hábet*	*ju*	*thaz*	*áltar,*
ask.2PL.IMP	him.ACC	it	in	true	he	has	already	that	age

thaz	*er*	*in*	*thésen*	*thingon*	*firspréchan*	*mag*	*sih*	*sélbon!*
that	he	in	these	things	promise.INF	be.able.3SG	REFL	REFL

'Ask him; he is enough old to be able to defend himself in theses matters.'
(OtfE II, 6: 3-4)

Leopold (1977: 66): „Das mhd. bildet mehr die positive, das mnd. mehr die negative Seite heraus".

Dutch:

[14]   *Het   *versprekt*   mooi   weer   te   worden*
          EXPL   promise.3SG   nice   weather   to   become.INF

          Intended: 'The weather promises to be nice.'

[15]   *versprechen*1 + NP:

          und   dûht   in   gar   ein   fremder   man
          and   seem.3SG.PST   him.ACC   even   a   foreign   man

          daz   er   versprach   guot   unde   êre
          that   he   promise.3SG.PST   manor   and   honor

          'And a foreign man seemed to promise him a manor and honor.'
          (MBD, *Sanct Franzisken Leben*, Zeilen: 2389-2390)

Early New High German (1350-1700)

The matrix subject can be equipped with the feature [-human]:

[16] *Hat*　　　*dir*　　　*auch*　*die*　*vergangene*　*zeit*　*jemahlen*　*versprochen*
　　　have.3SG　you.DAT　also　the　past　　　　　time　　　　　　　promise.PTCP

　　　wider　*herumb#zu kommen,*　*wann*　*du*　*sie*　　　*bedörffen*　*möchtest?*
　　　again　to.come.INF　　　　　when　you　her.ACC　need.INF　would.like.3SG

'Did the past time promise you to come back when you will need it?'
(BonF, Hans Michael Moscherosch (1650): *Gesichte*, p. 37: 22-4; Alsatian)

In ENHG *versprechen*2 emerges:

[17] *Das Schaff*
the ship

war *von* *den* *Wellen* *dergestalt* *bezwungen/* *daß* *wir*
be.3SG.PST by the waves to.such.an.extent defeat.PTCP that we

keine *andere* *Hoffnung* *hatten/* *als* *etliche* *Stein—Klippen/*
no other hope have.1PL.PST than several stone.cliffs

welche *im* *Meere* [NP **einige** **Sicherheit**] *wider*
which in.the sea some safety against

das *Wasser/* *nicht* *aber* *wider* *den* *Hunger* *versprachen*
that water NEG but against the starvation promise.3PL.PST

'The ship was hit by the waves to such an extent that we had no other hope than some stone cliffs that promised a safety against the water, but not against the starvation.' (BonF, Christian Weise (1684): *Jugendlust*, 112: 25-27, Upper Saxon)

The pattern *versprechen*2 + infinitive occurs:

[18] *daß* (...)   *das*   *Ganze*   *eine*   *Konsitenz*   *zu*   *gewinnen*   *versprach*

     that   the   whole   a   consistency   to   win.INF   promise.3SG.PST

'that (...) the whole matter promised to get consistent'
(cit. op. Diewald & Smirnova 2011)

18th century			19th century		
lexical reading	functional reading	Σ	lexical reading	functional reading	Σ
47 (96%)	**2 (4%)**	49 (100%)	174 (90,2%)	**19 (9,8%)**	193 (100%)

Table 2: The use of *versprechen* in New High German
(according to Diewald & Smirnova 2011: 92)

Notice, however, that embedded infinitival complements are <u>not</u> a necessary condition for the emergence of the functional use of *threaten/promise.*

Polish *grozić* ('threaten'):

[4a] *Grozili*   *jej*   *wyrzuceniem/*__wyrzucić__*   *z*   *pracy*

threaten.VIR.*l*-PTCP   her.DAT   firing.INS/**fire.INF**   from   work.GEN

'They threatened her to fire her.' (NKJP, *Dziennik Zachodni,* 12/7/2008)

[4b] *Wiele*   *budynków*   *grozi*   *zawaleniem/*__zawalić się__*

many   buildings   threaten.3SG   collapsing.INS/collapse.INF

'Many buildings threaten to collapse.' (NKJP, *Dziennik Zachodni,* 17/8/2002)

A similar situation holds for the functional use of Hungarian *ígér* ('promise'):

[19a] *A   napsütés* [_NP_ *jó   időt*]   *ígér*

     the   sunshine   good   time.ACC   promise.3SG

     'The sunshine promises good weather.' (Julia Bacskai-Atkari, p. c.)

[19b] *Az   idő   szépnek*   *ígérkezik*

     the   time   beautiful.DAT   promise.REFL.3SG

     'The weather promises to be good.'
     (Julia Bacskai-Atkari, p. c.)

[19c] **Az   idő   szépnek*   [_INF_ *lenni*] *ígér*

     the   time   beautiful.DAT   be.INF   promise.3SG

     Intended: 'The weather promises to be good.'
     (Julia Bacskai-Atkari, p. c.)

Interim summary

Old High German (750–1050) $versprechen \neq$ 'promise'

Middle High German (1050–1350) $versprechen = versprechen1$

Early New High German (1350–1700) $versprechen2 + $ NP/DP

New High German (1700–1900) $versprechen2 + $ infinitive

Puzzle: Besides *versprechen*, German also possesses *verheißen* ('promise'). It behaves like *versprechen* having two different readings:

➢ lexical use:

[20a] *Verheissen*   *werden*   [NP *Löhne   bis zu   15 000 Franken*]

    promised.PTCP   PASS.AUX.3PL   wages   up to   15 000 Swiss franc

    'They promised wages up to 15 000 Swiss franc'.
    (IDS, *St. Galler Tagblatt*, 18/4/1998)

[20b] *Der   Bewerber   verheißt,*   [INF *das   Unternehmen   mit   Visionen   zu   bereichern*]

    the   applicant   promise.3SG   the   company   with   visions   to   enhance

    'The applicant promises to enhance the company with (some new) visions.'
    (IDS, *St. Galler Tagblatt*, 22/5/1999)

➢ functional use:

[20c] *Die   neue   Regionalliga-Saison   verheißt*   [INF *eine   gute   zu   werden*]

    the   new   regional.league-campaign   promise.3SG   a   good   to   become.INF

    'The new regional league campaign promises to be a good one.'
    (IDS, *Rhein-Zeitung,* 1/8/1998)

[20d] *Die   Wolken   verhiessen*   [NP *nichts   Gutes*]

    the   clouds   promise.3PL.PST   NEG   good

    'These clouds didn't promise anything good.'
    (IDS, *St. Galler Tagblatt*, 14/7/1997)

A note on the *promise* cycle

> „The Linguistic Cycle is a name for changes where a phrase or word gradually disappears and is replaced by a new linguistic item.“
> (van Gelderen 2009: 2)

[21] The *promise* cycle in the history of German:

giheizan < verheißen < versprechen   (to be extended)

> „Toward the end of the cycle, similar events start again, but they are (slightly) different and happen at a different pace. The changes are therefore unidirectional.“ (van Gelderen 2011: 3)

[22]

Die	*Baustelle*	*verheißt*/?*verspricht*	*ein*	*Chaos*	*zu*	*werden*
the	construction.place	promise.3SG	a	chaos	to	become.INF

'The construction place promises to be a chaos.'
(Elisabeth Berner, p.c.)

If *versprechen* did not mean 'promise' in OHG, we might wonder how one could make a promise in OHG?

Instead of *versprechen*, another verb was used: *giheizan*:

[23a]

Ther	*gótes*	*geist*	*ther*	*mo*	*ánawas,*	*ther*	*gihíaz*	*imo*	*tház,*
the	God.GEN	spirit	that	him	at.be.3SG.PST	he	promise.3SG.PST	him	that

thaz	*Kríst*	*er*	*druagi*	*in*	*hénti*
that	Christ	he	hold.3SG.SUBJ	in	hands

'The Spirit of God being in him promised him, he will carry Christ in his own hands.' (OtfE I, 15: 5-6)

[23b]

Sos	*ér*	*gihiaz*	*ju*	*wánne*	*themo*	*drútmanne,*
so	he	promise.3SG.PST	already	somewhen	the	man.DAT

thaz	*ér*	*uns*	*sin*	*gisíuni*	*in*	*líchamen*	*gábi;*
that	he	us	his	face	in	body	give.3SG.SUBJ

'At this time he promised this man, he will reveal himself to us in this body.' (OtfE I, 10: 13-14)

[24] ... thaz$_i$ V° [$_{CP}$ Op$_i$ [thaz] ...]$_i$ -----> ... V° [$_{CP}$ [thaz] ...]   (see Axel 2009, 2012)

In MHD *giheizan* disappears and *verheißen* undertakes its function. At the very beginning it embeds infinitival complements:

[25] *da   wirs   verheißen   han   zu   thun*

because we.it   promise.PTCP have.3PL   to   do.INF

'because we promised to do that'
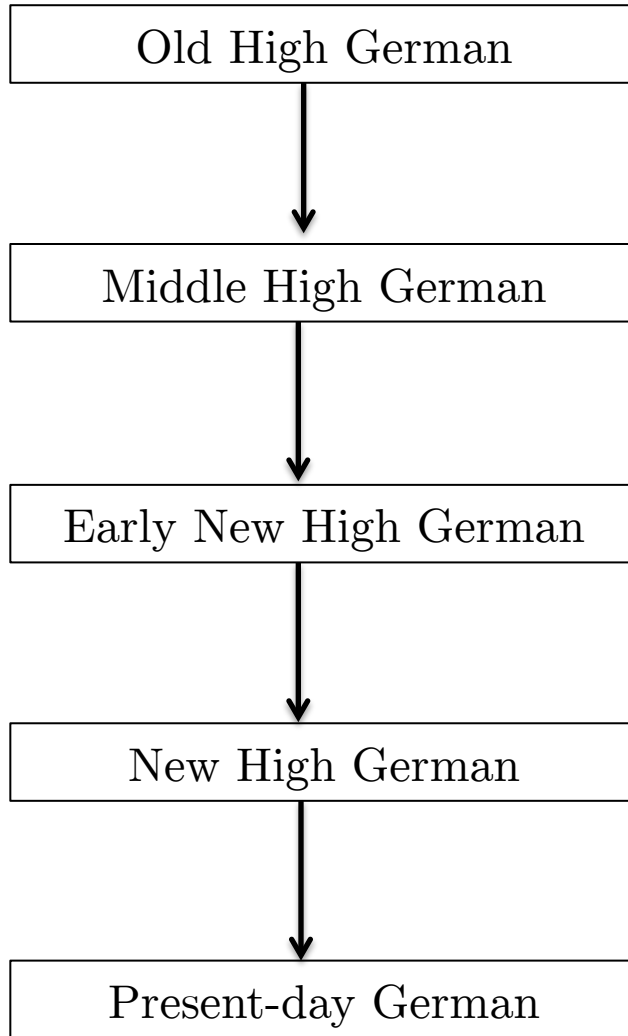(MHD, *Prosa-Lancelot*, part 2, p. 46: 21-2)

Interestingly enough, *verheißen*2 seems to occur in New High German, i.e. after *versprechen*2 that might have given rise to *verheißen*2:

[26] *Sie   scheinen   Huld   und   Liebe   zu   verheißen*

they   seem   favor   and   love   to   promise.INF

'They (= red lips) seem to promise favor and love.'
(IDS, Franz Grillparzer (1818-20): *Das goldene Vließ*)

In Present-day German *verheißen* is being treated as old-fashioned and it belongs to the passive vocabulary of most native speakers.

Summing up

Old High German	*giheizan* + *that*-clauses/NP
↓	↓
Middle High German	*verheißen*1 + infinitive/NP *versprechen*1 + NP/*that*-clause
↓	↓
Early New High German	*versprechen*1 + infinitive *versprechen*2 + NP
↓	↓
New High German	*verheißen*2 + NP/infinitive *versprechen*2 + infinitive
↓	↓
Present-day German	*verheißen* (both lexical and functional) is about to disappear

It *promises* to be the end …

… thank you!

Abbreviations

1/2/3	1st/2nd/3rd person
DAT	dative
ET	evaluation time
GEN	genitive
IMP	imperative
INF	infinitive
INS	instrumental
IPP	infinitivus pro participio
l-PTCP	participle inflected for number and gender
M	masculine
PST	past tense
PTCP	participle
REFL	reflexive
RT	reference time
SG	singular
ST	speech time
VIR	virile

Primary sources

BonF   *Das Bonner Frühneuhochdeutschkorpus* (http://www.korpora.org/Fnhd/)

IDS   *COSMAS II*, Institut für Deutsche Sprache (https://cosmas2.ids-mannheim.de/cosmas2-web/)

MBD   *Mittelhochdeutsche Begriffsdatenbank* (http://mhdbdb.sbg.ac.at)

NKJP   *National Corpus of Polish* (http://nkjp.pl)

OtfE   *Otfrids Evangelienbuch*. Ed. by Oskar Erdmann. Tübingen [1973]: Max Niemeyer.

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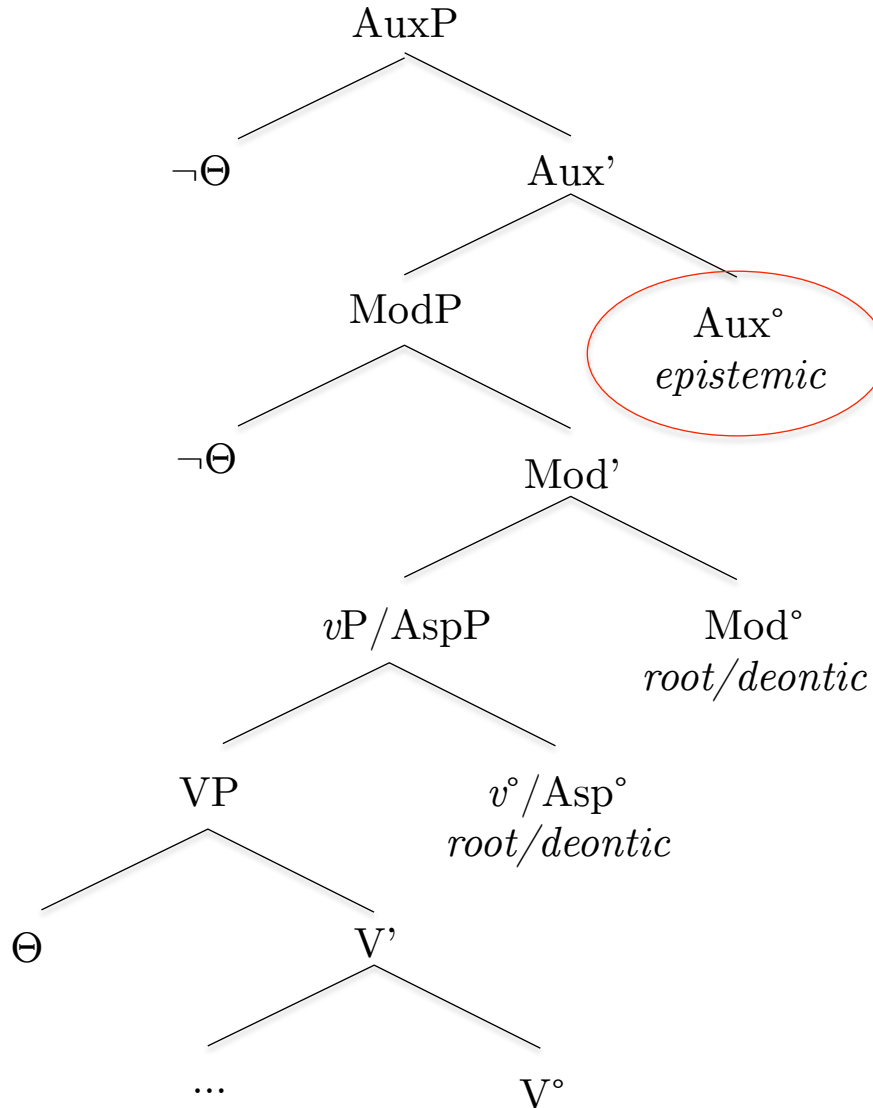
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Promise and *threaten* as epistemic modal verbs

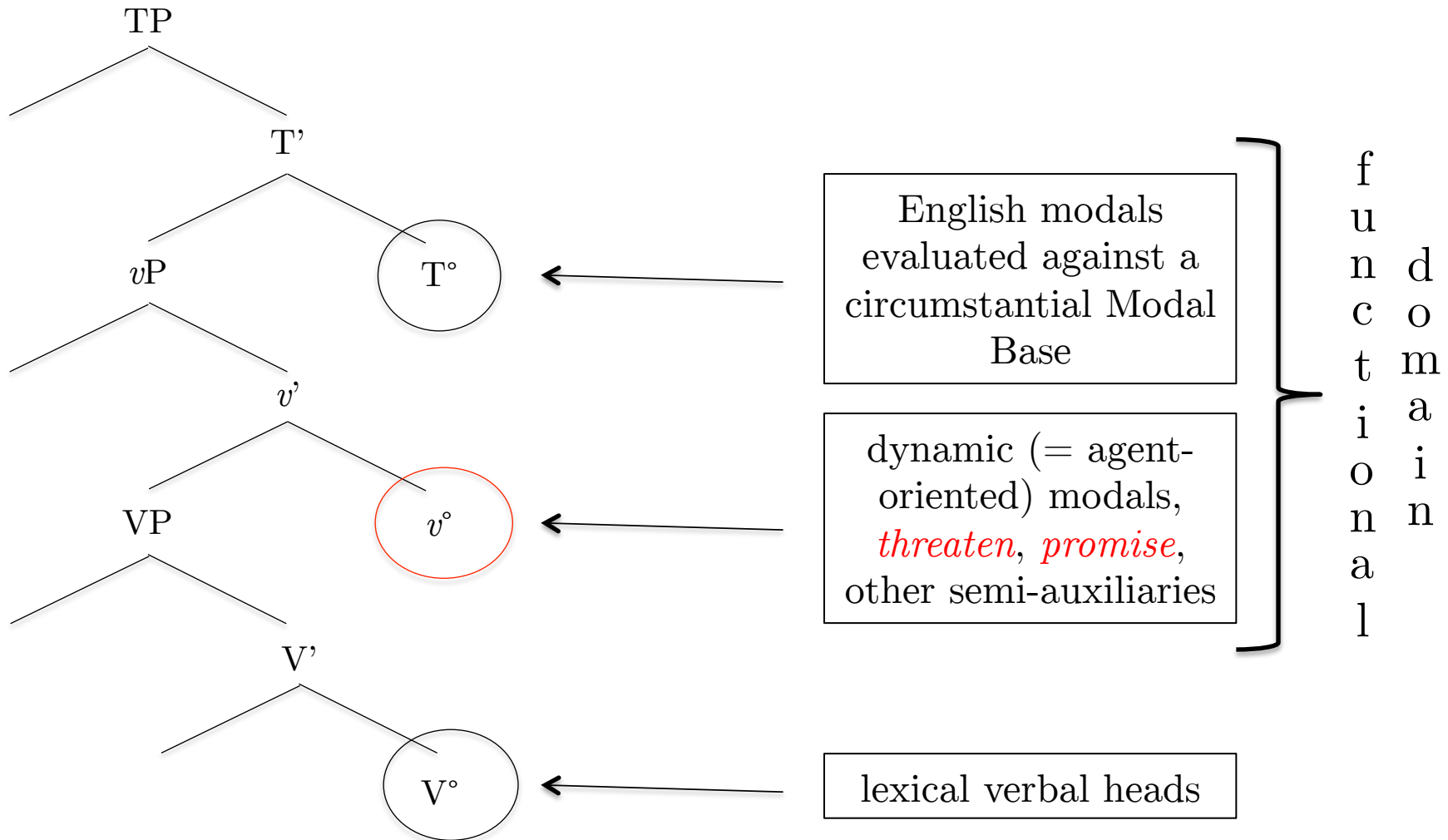Wurmbrand (2001): *versprechen* and *drohen* merge as Aux-heads:

AuxP
- ¬Θ
- Aux'
  - ModP
    - ¬Θ
    - Mod'
      - *v*P/AspP
        - VP
          - Θ
          - V'
            - ...
            - V°
        - *v*°/Asp°
          root/deontic
      - Mod°
        root/deontic
  - Aux°
    epistemic

brauchen
drohen
dürfte
können
mögen
müssen
versprechen

Drohen and *versprechen*:

a) behave like epistemic modals,
b) cannot co-occur with other epistemic modals,
c) cannot be embedded under periphrastic tense forms,
d) must be always finite.

Lubańska (2010): *promise* and *threaten* externally merge as epistemic (functional) *v*-heads:

Question I: Why *promise* and *threaten* are not epistemic modal verbs (mainly based on Reis 2005, 2007)?

(I) epistemic modals outscope TP:

[27a] *Das   Wetter   muss   schön   gewesen   sein* $\boxed{\text{ST} = \text{ET}}$
       the   weather   must.3SG   nice   been   be

       'The weather must have been nice.'

[27a'] **Das   Wetter   musste   schön   sein* $\boxed{\text{RT} = \text{ET}}$
        the   weather   must.3SG.PST   nice   be

        Intended: 'The weather must have been nice.'

If *versprechen* and *drohen* would be epistemic modal verbs, ST should equal ET like in [27a] (except for free indirect discourse contexts):

[27b] **Das   Wetter   verspricht   schön   geworden   zu   sein* $\boxed{\text{ST} = \text{ET}}$
       the   weather   promise.3SG   nice   become   to   be

       Intended: 'The weather promises to have been nice.'

[27b'] *Das   Wetter   versprach   schön   zu   werden* $\boxed{\text{RT} = \text{ET}}$
        the   weather   must.3SG.PAST   nice   to   become

        'The weather promised to be nice.'

(II) epistemic modals do not occur in root questions:

[28] *_Muss_   _das_   _Wetter_   _schön_   _gewesen_   _sein?_

      must.3SG   the   weather   nice   been   be

      Intended: 'Must the weather have been nice?'

On the contrary, _versprechen_ can occur in root questions:

[29]   _Verspricht_   _das_   _Wetter_   _schön_   _zu_   _werden?_

      promise.3SG   the   weather   nice   to   become

      'Does the weather promise to be nice?'

Daniel Gutzmann (p. c.) pointed out to me that in criminal contexts epistemic _müssen_ can occur in root questions:

[30]   _Muss_   _der_   _Täter_   _wirklich_   _ein_   _Mann_   _gewesen_   _sein?_

      must.3SG   the   offender   really   a   man   been   be

      'Must the offender have been a man?'

Notice, however, that [30] does not have to be analyzed as a root question. It can be used as a dubitative question having a different illocutionary force.

(III) epistemic modals do not occur as past participles:

[31] *Das   Wetter   hat   schön   sein   *gemusst*/*müssen*
       the   weather have.3SG nice   be.INF must.PTCP/IPP

       Intended: 'The weather must have been nice.'

Versprechen and *drohen* in turn can be embedded under periphrastic tense forms:

[32] *Was*   *ein*   *sehenswertes*   *Derby*   *der*   *Handball-Landesliga*
       what   a   woth.seeing   derby   the   handball-sixth.division

       zu   *werden*   *versprochen*   *hatte*,   *verkam*   *in* | pluperfect |
       to   become.INF   promised.PTCP   had.3SG   went.bad.3SG   in

       den   *Augen*   *manches*   *Zeugen*   *zur*   *Lachnummer.*
       the   eyes   some   spectators   to.the   laughing.stock

       'What promised to be a worth seeing handball match has been perceived as a laughing
       stock according to some spectators.' (Colomo 2011: 260)

[33] *Es*   *wird*   *wohl*   *mal*   *wieder*   *zu*   *regnen*   *drohen* | future tense |
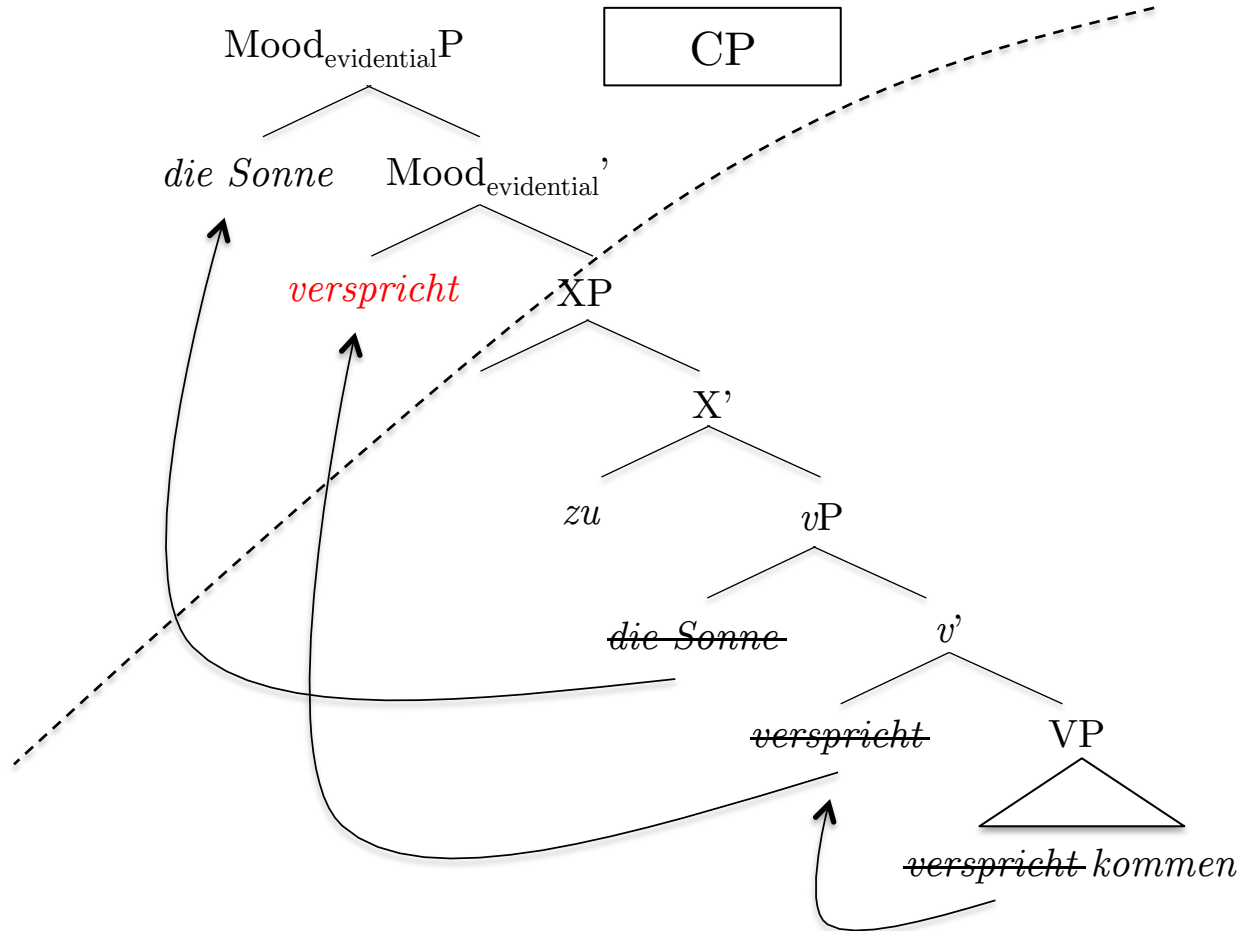   it   will.3SG   MP   MP   again   to   rain.INF   threaten.INF

       ≈ 'Probably, it will be raining again.' (Reis 2007: 17)

Promise and *threaten* as evidential predicates: Rooryck (2001)

Promise and *threaten* raise to $\text{Mood}_{\text{evidential}}°$ [= CP] or enter an Agree relation with it:

Mood$_{\text{evidential}}$P

CP

die Sonne   Mood$_{\text{evidential}}$'

verspricht   XP

X'

zu   *v*P

die Sonne   *v*'

verspricht   VP

verspricht kommen

Die Sonne verspricht zu kommen ('The sun promises to come out')

Question II: Why *promise* is not an evidential predicate?

(I) If *promise* and *threaten* would merge in the CP domain, they could occur neither as infinitives nor as participles.

(II) If *seem* is classified as an evidential predicate as well, *promise* and *threaten* are expected to behave in the same way. Notice, however, that *scheinen* behaves like modal verbs (ST = ET).

(III) Whereas *scheinen* ('seem') appears compatible with all kinds of Aktionsarts, *versprechen* and *drohen* allow only non-stative complements:

[34]   *Er*   *scheint/droht*   *krank*   *zu*   *werden*

      he   seem/threaten.3SG   sick   to   become.INF

      'He seems/threatens to be sick.' (Reis 2007: 15)

[35]   *Er*   *scheint/*droht*   *krank*   *zu*   *sein*

      he   seem/threaten.3SG   sick   to   become.INF

      'He seems/threatens to be sick.' (Reis 2007: 15)

According to Colomo (2011), *drohen* and *versprechen* ought to be treated as evidential predicates because they can always be replaced by *scheinen*.

[36] *Das Wetter versprricht/scheint schön zu werden.*

Notice, however, that this is not true:

[37a] *Aber was kümmert das einem, wenn im eigenen Portemonnaie Ebbe zu drohen/*scheinen scheint.* (IDS, *St. Galler Tagblatt,* 30/4/2010)

[37b] *Grosse Erwartungen hatten die Anleger gehabt, weil das Konzept von Planet Hollywood so viel zu versprechen/*scheinen schien.*
    (IDS, *Zürcher Tagesanzeiger*, 19/8/1999)

[37c] *»Casandra«: ein Name, der für ein Restaurant nichts Gutes zu verheißen/*scheinen scheint.* (IDS, *Nürnberger Zeitung*, 15/2/2003)

Heine & Miyashita (2004): Grammatikalisierung

- *versprechen*2 ist als Ergebnis eines Grammatikalisierungsprozesses aufzufassen,
- *versprechen*2 ist jünger als *versprechen*1,
- *versprechen*2 verdankt seinen Ursprung *versprechen*1.

Stufe	Kontext	Bedeutung
I Ausgangsstufe	(a) Menschliche Subjektreferenten. (b) Aktionen, die beabsichtigt sind und kontrolliert werden können.	*Maria verspricht, Paul zu helfen.*
II Brückenstufe	(a) Menschliche Subjektreferenten. (b) Handlungen, die nicht unbedingt beabsichtigt sein bzw. kontrolliert werden können.	*Klaus verspricht ein guter Arzt zu werden.*
III Wendestufe	(a) Der Subjektreferent ist unbelebt (b) (Daraus ergibt sich): Handlungen, die nicht beabsichtigt sein bzw. kontrolliert werden können.	*Sein Buch verspricht ein Erfolg zu werden.*
IV Konventionalisierung	Die Zielbedeutung ist nicht mehr an einen bestimmten Kontext gebunden, sie kann in neuen Kontexten vorkommen.	Nicht belegt.

Modell der Extension von *versprechen* (nach Heine & Miyashita 2004)