

The word order of complement clauses in Wangerooge Frisian

Wangerooge Frisian is a dialect of Frisian which went extinct in the early 20th century. It is relatively well documented (see especially Ehrentraut 1996), and some linguistic studies have appeared (e.g. Bosse 2012; Hoekstra 2008, forthcoming; Versloot 2001, 2002), but there is as yet no comprehensive grammatical description of the dialect.

In my presentation, I will first give a brief introduction to Wangerooge Frisian and then present the results of a study of complement clauses in this dialect. As in many Germanic languages, the finite verb in Wangerooge Frisian may appear in different positions in complement clauses: either in second position (“V2”), cf. (1), or later in the clause (“V-late”), cf. (2):

(1) V2

<i>da</i>	<i>qua</i>	<i>dju</i>	<i>oel</i>	<i>hex</i>	<i>to</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>moget</i> ,
then	say.3SG	DEF.F	old	witch	to	DEF.F	maid

[<i>dat</i>	<i>yu</i>	<i>sil</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>aúven</i>	<i>heit</i>	<i>máckii</i> .]
COMP	she	have_to.3SG	DEF.M	oven	hot	make.INF

‘Then the old witch says to the maid that she has to heat the oven.’ (Ehrentraut 1996: 446.448)

(2) V-late

<i>iik</i>	<i>háb</i>	<i>mii</i>	<i>dait</i>	<i>farflócket</i> ,
I	have.1SG	me	that	swear.PTCP

[<i>dat</i>	<i>iik</i>	<i>dait</i>	<i>nich</i>	<i>doo</i>	<i>weil</i> .]
COMP	I	that	not	do.INF	will.1SG

‘I have promised myself that I will not do that.’ (Ehrentraut 1849: 61)

A pilot study indicates that the V2 pattern is especially frequent in reported utterances, e.g. after verbs like *quidder* ‘say’ and *fartääl* ‘tell’. However, this cannot be the whole story, as there are examples like (3), where the complement clause has V2 but does not express a reported utterance:

(3) V2

<i>nuu</i>	<i>sjucht</i>	<i>hii</i>	<i>ainmool</i>
now	see.3SG	he	once

[<i>dat</i>	<i>djuu</i>	<i>faun</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>buut</i>]
COMP	DEF.F	girl	is	outside

‘Now at one point he sees that the girl is outside.’ (Ehrentraut 1996: 449.133)

In my presentation I will consider other relevant factors determining the position of the finite verb and discuss how Wangerooge Frisian fits into existing typologies of complement clause word order.

References

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