

Syntactically-conditioned morphological blocking: *ge*-prefix blocking vs. IPP-constructions in Gottscheerisch

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Empirical puzzle. In this paper we take a closer look at the the perfective prefix *ge*- and the structural factors that license (or block) its occurrence in Gottscheerisch, a Southern Bavarian Sprachinsel variety of Gottschee (Kočevje), Slovenia. Today, most Gottscheerisch speakers live in Austria (e.g. Graz, Klagenfurt) and the United States (e.g. Cleveland, Queens, NY), with very few remaining in Slovenia. Here we focus on developments in the American Gottscheer speech community, where Standard German-like IPP (*Infinitivus pro participio*, aka *Ersatzinfinitiv*) constructions appear to have displaced inherited supine (*ge*-less participial) constructions (see below).

Data. The Gottscheerisch examples in (1) through (4) represent an historically widespread morphosyntactic alternation in the language, whereby participles appear in supine forms (i.e. without the typical perfective *ge*-prefix) when followed by another non-finite verb form (see (1) and (2)), but appear with the *ge*-prefix clause-finally (see (3) and (4)). The speech community in the United States, however, is tending towards producing IPP-constructions in these environments, as in (5) below, a trend also observed in the Austrian community, despite limited contact between the two groups.

Analysis. Adopting a position originally proposed by Zwart (2007), we interpret participial morphology to be a function of the dependency of a participle on the temporal auxiliary. The syntactic conditioning of the *ge*-prefix also supports a post-syntactic (i.e., realizational) approach to verbal morphology (Putnam & Hoffman, 2021; Salzman, 2019). Additionally, the trend towards IPP-constructions among both Austrian and American Gottscheers suggests a shift shared across the diaspora, diminishing the theoretic role played by the local contact languages in driving this shift. This fact suggests then that these IPP-constructions may result in more direct structure-meaning mappings.

- (1) Ben's ūvmaria hot gəlaitət, hōbm biər khindər ahoimə **_mišt** **žain**
when=it Avemaria have.3SG toll.PTCP have.1PL we children home must.PTCP be.INF
'when Avemaria tolled, we kids had to be home' (W. Tschinkel & Tschinkel, 1973, 29)
- (2) ār't'n **_hot** **gəheart**
he=have.3SG=him have.PTCP hear.PTCP
'he had heard him' (H. Tschinkel, 1908, 297)
- (3) Də khnaxtə hont də püəbm **žlūffm** **gəhoaisn**
the young_men have.3PL the boys sleep.INF tell.PTCP
'the young men told the boys (to go) to sleep' (W. Tschinkel & Tschinkel, 1973, 85)

- (4) Ben oaindər žaubm išt gəbān ünt et mear **uərbaitn hot gəməxt**,...
 when someone alone be.3SG be.PTCP and NEG more work.INF have.3SG can.PTCP
 ‘when someone was alone and couldn’t work anymore, ...’ (W. Tschinkel & Tschinkel, 1973, 491)
- (5) bir hobm lai **aüf-missn-passn**
 we have.1PL just PRT-must.INF-pay_attention.INF
 ‘we just had to pay attention’

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