

Direct objects in Swabian *AM*-Progressives

This paper presents work-in-progress and some preliminary thoughts on the properties and analysis of direct objects in *AM*-progressives in Swabian. The data is from three speakers speaking a Swabian dialect in a rural area around Bad Wurzach, county of Ravensburg.

Specific constructions used for progressive semantics are much more common in German than is often claimed in teaching grammars (Gárgyán, 2013). Multiple constructions are termed progressive in German, with *AM*-progressives possibly the most common, at least based on written sources (Gárgyán, 2013). These constructions usually contain a non-finite main verb in combination with a finite form of *sein* 'be'(1). Swabian has only the *AM*-progressive and the *BEIM*-progressive (2), which also occur in other variants of German. Each requires a finite form of *sein* 'be' + *AM* or *BEIM* followed by the infinitival form of the main verb. Some of them may have a special absentive reading (1a,b, 2b, that imply that the event takes place in temporal and/or spatial distance from the speaker (Abraham, 2007; Fortmann and Wöllstein, 2019).

Some work has argued that *BEIM* and *AM* in German are prepositions fused with a following definite article (Ebert, 1996), Krause 1997). This view requires the non-finite verb to be nominal, resulting in a PP structure for *AM/BEIM*+infinitive. However, much work has shown that this does not hold, at least for the *AM*-progressive in German (Gargyn 2013, Glück 2001, Bhatt & Schmidt 1993). For example, modification contrasts show that only the *BEIM*-progressive may be a combination of preposition and nominal in Swabian. While the verbs in *AM*-progressives are modified by adverbs (3), the ones in *BEIM*-progressives are modified by adjectives (4), shown in the agreement marker *-a* with the nominalized verb. Due to this contrast, I suggest that *AM*- and *BEIM*-progressives are structurally quite distinct.

This paper focuses on some of the properties of objects in *AM*-progressives in Swabian and suggests a preliminary analysis based on the observed patterns. I adopt and modify the proposal in Bhatt & Schmidt (1993), where an aspectual head *AM* is responsible for object case in Kölsch and Standard German and other similar proposals (Svenonius, 2002), (Kratzer, 2004).

The direct objects in Swabian *AM*-progressives are preferably plural, most likely pragmatically motivated (5). When they are noun phrases, they have to be indefinite objects (5, 7). The preference for plural and indefinite objects strongly favours *D*-less noun phrases in these constructions. One significant difference to other German variants (6) is that noun phrase objects must remain adjacent to the infinitival verb (7), while pronominal objects can not (8). At the same time, we have frozen scope interpretation with respect to negation with both types of objects (9, 10).

This pattern contrasts with the data in Bhatt and Schmidt (1993) from Kölsch and German, where definite objects and pronouns are allowed and preferred in pre-*AM* position.

The ordering contrasts between pronominal objects and noun phrase objects (7, 8), despite the same scope readings (9, 10), suggest strongly that the pronouns have moved away from the verb while the noun phrases remain within the VP. Furthermore, only personal pronouns can be used in these constructions, not demonstrative pronouns (11). Therefore, I propose that the VP-external position of the pronouns is PF-movement, while case assignment occurs in situ within AspP for both types of objects. While the data so far is inconclusive, further research is planned to determine if the pronominal objects are also indefinite.

- (1) a. Sie ist arbeit-en b. sie ist beim arbeit-en c. sie ist am arbeit-en
 she is work-INF she is BEIM work-INF she is AM work-INF
 'she is (gone) working' 'she is working'

