

EXPRESSIONS OF FUTURITY IN THE VILAMOVICEAN LANGUAGE

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Nowadays, Vilamovicean (Wymysöeriś) is probably the smallest Germanic language in the world. It is understood by approximately eighty people, and actively spoken by no more than thirty elderly persons who live in a small town in Wilamowice in Southern Poland. Vilamovicean, despite a significantly weaker position than the dominant Polish language, has preserved its genuine Germanic character without having experienced any important Slavic influence.

According to the short Vilamovicean grammar from the beginning of the 20th century, and as maintained later in a few superficial descriptions of the verbal system, future events and situations are indicated by means of an analytic construction *wada* + infinitive I and II (similar to the German future with the auxiliary *werden*). No other means of conveying the future meaning are identified in the existing and extremely scarce literature. However, in light of the evidence collected by Alexander Andrason and Tymoteusz Król during their field work in 2008 and 2009 in Wilamowice, there is no doubt that the expression of future actions is not limited to the *wada* construction. On the contrary, the futurity may be conveyed by a numerous set of formations of which some can be found in other Germanic languages while others are particular to Vilamovicean. The lecture aims at presenting all those morpho-syntactic means of providing the future meaning.

In the first part (Introduction), I will familiarize listeners with the linguistic, geographic, and sociologic situation of the Modern Vilamovicean. In particular, some general information on its verbal system will be provided. In the second part (Evidence), all expressions that may denote future events will be introduced. These constructions will be divided into two main groups. The first one includes typical Germanic formations like the present tense, the periphrases *har wyt* + inf., *har wjyd* (+ noun/past part.), *har wyt wada* (+ noun/past part.), *har wyt hon* + past part., and *har zo* + inf., as well as other clearly modally based future expressions, e.g. *müssa*, *kynna*, *wyłta*, *diyfa*, and *mygja* + inf. The second class consists of two constructions which are innovative and unique in the Germanic family: *wyt* + past part. (active meaning) and *wyt* + present. Furthermore, two other genuine Vilamovicean formations will be presented, namely *har wie* + past part. (active meaning) and *wie* + present, which, even though reserved to the conditional value, display a similar morpho-syntactic structure as the new futures. In the third part (Conclusion), it will be demonstrated that the innovative constructions are significantly less common than the regular futures, and finally, the explanation of the origin of such novel grams will be proposed.

Subsequently, Tymoteusz Król – the only young Vilamovicean native speaker – will demonstrate the use of the language, and in the end, a short documentary will be presented where people with the best Vilamovicean competence speak about their language and tongue. In both cases, in order to ensure a better understanding, the attendants will be provided with the text in Vilamovicean and its English translation.