

The aim of this dissertation is to give an overall picture of the category future and its language realization in the Scandinavian languages. In the first part of the thesis, the category is described from a philosophical point of view. With support in one of two most influential theories on metaphysics of time, the dynamic A-theory, I suggest an intuitively plausible and linguistically relevant model of time which as opposite to the traditional time line is able to account for the striking temporal asymmetry known from several European and non-European languages. The usual time line has been replaced by branching future with branches representing potential future courses of events, of which some are more probable than others. On the basis of this model, future constructions in Danish, Norwegian and Swedish which are the languages of the so called 'futureless area' (Dahl 2000) are described. In the second part of the study, the inventory of the future markers in the three languages is discussed systematically according to their grammaticalization source domains (modality, motion verbs and aspect). I describe the three central types of future markers in the Scandinavian languages, i.e. modal verb constructions (*vil* and *skal* in Danish, *ska* in Swedish), the de-venitive construction with *kommer til at* (Danish), *kommer til* (Norwegian) and *kommer att* (Swedish) and futurate present (including constructions with *blive* and *f*) with respect to their conceptual motivation, grammaticalization, semantics and functions. I accommodate different theories and approaches such as the grammaticalization theory (Bybee et al. 1994), cognitive linguistics (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Johnson 1987) and other in order to elucidate mechanisms behind the language realization of futurity from different perspectives.