

A Diachronic Analysis of Variable Future-in-the-Past and Canonical Future Expression in Spanish

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Linguists and grammarians have stated that the variation in past tense subordinate clauses involving subsequent actions in relation to the matrix clause (i.e. FUTURE-IN-THE-PAST (FP)) is similar to the variation in canonical future (CF) forms in the Romance languages (e.g. Alarcos Llorach, 1973; Lozano, 1988). As such, the conditional form (1a) would function similarly to the synthetic future (2a), and the imperfect periphrastic (1b) would function similarly to the present periphrastic future (2b).

- (1) a. Les dió licencia y esperanzas de que presto **iría** a Judea.
'He gave them permission and hope that soon he would go to Judea.'
b. Mañana hemos dicho que **íbamos a ir** a la Sierra.
'We've said that tomorrow we were going to go to the Sierra.'
- (2) a. ... se dice que el dinero no **irá** a Moscú...
'...it's said that the money will not go to Moscow...'
b. Me parece que no **vamos a ir** al cine, ya.
'It seems to me that we aren't going to go to the movies, now.'

Our previous research on FP suggested that the constraints governing FP variation across time develop analogously to those for the CF across Romance varieties in other studies. However, there are some differences between the two contexts, which may be attributable to differences between the method we employed and that of the studies of CF to which we compared our results. Therefore, the present study aims to examine diachronic CF variation using the same methods as we used to examine FP variation in order to make a true comparison possible. As with our FP data, we extracted CF synthetic and periphrastic tokens of 16 verbs in subordinate clauses from the *Corpus de Referencia del Español* (CORDE) and the *Corpus Real de Español Actual* (CREA) across 3 time periods (1580-1630; 1780-1830; 1980-2004). These tokens were then coded according to the following variables: grammatical person, proximity to speech event, sentence modality, polarity, temporal specificity, subordinate verb type, semantics of matrix clause, and verb frequency.

Results indicate that several of the differences found between FP and previous CF research were, in fact, attributable to differences in methods between studies. For example, we included *ir* 'to go' in our motion verb category whereas previous diachronic research on CF variation in Spanish did not (Aaron, 2006). While motion verbs appeared to act differently in FP and CF contexts when comparing to Aaron (2006), by including *ir* in the current study we found that the periphrastic variant occurred less with motion verbs in both CF and FP contexts. Similarly, for type of temporal specification, there was a difference in the constraint ranking between our previous study and prior CF research in the 20/21st century written data. However, when employing the same method, the constraint hierarchy is the same for the periphrastic variants across contexts. Nevertheless, some differences, such as that of polarity, remain. These

results demonstrate the strong similarity between the CF and FP, although there are some minor differences, and will be discussed in terms of grammaticalization.

References

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