

## From time to source of information: the evolution of the Ibero-Romance future

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Though the future tenses in Ibero-Romance languages all develop from a common Latin source, the present-day languages show a larger array of uses, ranging from temporal and modal readings to evidential interpretations. However, not all Ibero-Romance varieties exhibit the same behaviour and each language shows strong preferences for some uses over others. According to the literature, in Spanish and Portuguese the expression of conjecture and other modal readings is by far the most frequent use of the future tense (Sedano 2006; Escandell-Vidal 2014, for Spanish; Oliveira 1985; Cunha & Cintra 1992, for Portuguese), while temporal readings are hardly found (except perhaps in formal registers). Catalan, in contrast, seems to have specialised the future tense for temporal readings, to the extent that other non-temporal interpretations are disallowed (Badia i Margarit 1962; Wheeler et al. 1999). The data on which this picture is based come from either the scholars' own knowledge of the language or written/literary sources.

This situation raises two main issues:

- From a descriptive perspective, is the description accurate and valid for spoken language and more informal registers?
- From a theoretically oriented perspective, is there a common pattern of development for all Ibero-Romance languages? In other words, do they illustrate different stages of a single evolutionary path, or rather have they evolved independently?

To address these questions, we have carried out a quantitative analysis by comparing the picture obtained from the *Atlas Lingüístico de la Península Ibérica* (1920–1950) to current oral and spontaneous dialectal speech of all the Ibero-Romance varieties, which has been taken from a series of dialect corpora that reflect the current state of European Portuguese, Peninsular Spanish, Galician and Catalan. Our results show that all Ibero-Romance varieties have undergone deep changes, since Portuguese, Galician and Spanish have specialised the future tense as a marker of conjecture, virtually ousting the temporal nuance, while Catalan prefers it for temporal references though it is developing conjectural readings as well.

Our results suggest that the directionality of change goes systematically from temporal to evidential interpretations, though at different paces in different languages, thus confirming the ideas put forward by Squartini (2001) and Escandell-Vidal (2014) about the emergence of evidentiality in Romance languages.

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