

## Futures in language contact: the case of Molise Slavic

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Molise Slavic is a South-Slavic micro-language with three different dialects, spoken in southern Italy in a situation of total language contact with Italian varieties. It has two modally differentiated simple futures and three futures in the past. One of the two futures, which Molise Slavic has in common with Croatian, its “genetically” nearest standard language, is formed with the help of the clitic present of the auxiliary *tit* ‘to want, will’ + infinitive. Unlike the second type, using the auxiliary *jimat* ‘to have, must’, it existed already at the time of immigration from the Balkans 500 years ago. The *jimat* construction is most probably the result of language contact with local Italian varieties and their de-obligative future.

From a diachronic perspective, the *tit* future originally was more or less neutral with respect to modality, but in opposition to the *jimat* future, mainly expressing planned or necessary events, it acquired its modal connotation of probability. There is, however, some dialectal variation (Marra 2005). The futures in the past developed under the influence of the Romance concord of tenses. Two of them show a similar modal differentiation as the simple futures. Their formation required newly built imperfects of *tit* and *jimat* as auxiliaries. But there is also a third, modally neutral future in the past, based on the Italian model of using the conditional in this function (Breu 2011: 157–158). Things become still more complicated by the additional possibility of using the imperfect of the main verb as a future in the past, as in this case counterfactuality also plays a role.

Apart from the interaction between the future tense(s) and modality, the role of verbal aspect and epistemic functions will be discussed. An important point will, however, come from the comparison with another Slavic micro-language, Resian in north-eastern Italy, whose futures show some similarities but also important differences with respect to Molise Slavic, due to the differences in their traditional systems and despite a somewhat parallel Romance influence (Breu & Pila 2018). This part will be dealt with by referring to M. Pila’s findings in her talk on Resian. Another case to be addressed briefly is the comparison with Molise Albanian, influenced by a contact situation similar to that of Molise Slavic but with different results (Breu 2018: 220–222), among other things, without a future of probability and with a strong tendency towards using the present tense for the expression of future states of affairs

**References:** Breu, W. (2011). Il verbo slavomolisano in confronto con altre lingue minoritarie: mutamento contatto-dipendente, resistenza e sviluppo autonomo. In W. Breu (ed.), L’influsso dell’italiano sul sistema del verbo delle lingue minoritarie. Bochum, 149–184. Breu, W. (2018). On the influence of Italian on the Grammar of Molise Slavic and Italo-Albanian. In Th. Kahl, I. Krapova & G. Turano (eds.), *Balkan and South Slavic Enclaves in Italy: Languages, dialects and Identities*. Cambridge, 215–236. Breu, W. & M. Pila (2018). Взаимодействие будущего времени с глагольным видом в молізско-славянском и резьянском микроязыках. In: T. Milliaressi (éd.), *La relation temps/aspect: approches typologique et contrastive*. Lille, 129–138. Marra, A. (2005). Mutamento e persistenze nelle forme di futuro dello slavo molisano. In: W. Breu (ed.), *L’influsso dell’italiano sulla grammatica delle lingue minoritarie. Problemi di morfologia e sintassi*. Rende, 141–166.

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