

The grammaticalization of futures and conditionals in Ibero-Romance: a language contact approach

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As is well known, in medieval Ibero-Romance there is variation in the future and conditional (FC) verbs between the so-called synthetic forms and the analytic ones. While the former can appear with a pre- or postverbal pronoun, as illustrated in (1) and (2) for Catalan and Navarro-Aragonese, the latter contain a mesoclititic pronoun, as in (3).

- (1) a. *açò **li** faré jo (Fets)* [Catalan]
this CL do.FUT.1SG I 'I will do this to him'
b. *sus fiadores non **li** faran bona la heradat (FGN)* [Navarro-Aragonese]
his guarantors NEG CL do.FUT.3PL good the property
'his guarantors will not approve his property'
- (2) a. *Enviaré a éls e **diré**ls-ho (Fets)* [Catalan]
send.FUT.1SG to them and say.FUT.1SG CL CL
'I will send for them and say it to them'
b. *e **dire** uos como (Liber Regum)* [Navarro-Aragonese]
and say.FUT.1SG CL how 'and I will tell you how'
- (3) a. *E yo **mostrar-lo-us** hé a matar (Fets)* [Catalan]
and I INF-CL-CL AUX to kill 'and I will show you to kill it'
b. *et **mostrar** uos é los cabeçaleros (FGN)* [Navarro-Aragonese]
and INF CL AUX the executors 'and I will show you the executors.'

For Castilian, it has been shown that, while the synthetic structures with preverbal personal pronoun appear in specific syntactic-pragmatic environments, synthetic structures with postverbal pronominal configurations occur in the same contexts as the analytic ones (e.g. Bouzouita 2011, 2016; Castillo Lluch 2002; Eberenz 1991). This variation between postposition and mesoclisism seems to reflect a higher degree of grammaticalization, as, in the case of the former, univerbation appears to be taking place (cf. Lehmann 2020). Interestingly, there seems to be diatopic differences in the advancement of this grammaticalization process, considering that the FC forms with postverbal pronoun appear more frequently in medieval Eastern Ibero-Romance languages, such as Navarro-Aragonese and Catalan, than in the Central-Western ones, such as Castilian, Astur-Leonese and Galician-Portuguese. This diatopic pattern suggests that this language change phenomenon could be a case of shared grammaticalization (cf. Robbeets 2013) that was reinforced by language and dialect contact, and that seemed to have gradually spread from east to west (Bouzouita 2016; Bouzouita & Sentí in press [2022]; Primerano & Bouzouita submitted).

In this paper we attempt to test this hypothesis by means of a large-scale corpus analysis of the distribution of FCs in four Ibero-Romance languages, namely Catalan, Navarro-Aragonese, Castilian, and Astur-Leonese for the 13th and 14th century, using texts stemming from various discursive traditions. This empirical contrastive study examines (i) the distribution of the unstressed pronoun with FCs w.r.t. to their syntactic-pragmatic environment, as well as (ii) the factors affecting the microvariation between analytic and synthetic FCs with postposition (e.g. presence/absence of syncope, non-finite verbs, the lexeme, etc.). Qualitative and quantitative analyses indicate that grammaticalization is indeed more advanced in the east of the Iberian Peninsula: Catalan leads the changes, followed by Navarrese-Aragonese, while in Castilian and Astur-Leonese indications of this change remain very marginal for the considered period.

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