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# On the effects of Catalan contact in the variable expression of Spanish future tense

A contrastive study of Alcalá de Henares, Madrid  
and Palma, Majorca

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This paper aims to test the influence of Catalan-Spanish bilingualism in the variable distribution of the morphological future (MF) *cantaré* and the periphrastic variant (PF) *voy a cantar* in Spanish. As Catalan does not have a PF, it has been suggested that in the areas where Spanish coexists with Catalan the MF is relatively more used. A contrastive study of a bilingual community (Palma de Mallorca) and a Spanish monolingual one (Alcalá de Henares) confirms this hypothesis: the frequency of use of the MF among bilinguals is double what it is in a non-contact setting. At the same time, however, the two speech communities yield similar results in regard to the semantic values associated to each of the forms.

**Keywords:** language change, language variation, Spanish–Catalan contact, future tense

## 1. Introduction

A considerable number of studies regarding the expression of futurity throughout the Spanish-speaking world report a major change whereby the territory of the morphological future (MF) *cantaré* is being progressively taken over by the periphrastic future (PF) *voy a cantar*. This development, which is seen as the continuation of a historical trend that dates back to the 17th century (Aaron, 2010), has been studied primarily in the Spanish of Latin America: in many of such varieties the use of the MF has decreased considerably and in some of them it has even disappeared altogether (for comparative overviews of available studies see, for instance, Sedano, 2007; Blas Arroyo, 2008, p. 86; Osborne, 2008, p. 17–29; or Orozco, 2015, p. 350).

At the same time there are very few sociolinguistic studies that examine this issue in Peninsular Spanish. Based on what can be gleaned from the limited research that is available Blas Arroyo (2008, p. 86) suggests that in Spain the MF still enjoys a certain degree of vitality; nevertheless, as most studies focusing on Peninsular Spanish are based almost completely on written sources there is no strong empirical data to support this claim. At least one sociolinguistic study (Osborne, 2008), shows that in Andalusian Spanish rates of use of PF are on a par with the ones observed in Latin American communities, a finding that contradicts Blas Arroyo's proposal of a less developed change in peninsular Spanish. At any rate it is fair to conclude that we do not know much about the actual distribution of futures in Peninsular Spanish.

A related issue is the possible influence of language contact in the distribution of futures. On the one hand it has been claimed that in the United States Spanish contact with English has accelerated the advance of the periphrastic future in the Southwest (Gutiérrez, 1995, 2002) and among Colombian immigrants to New York (Orozco, 2015). In contrast, in the peninsular areas where Spanish coexists with Catalan, it has been observed that the decline of the MF is less advanced (Blas Arroyo, 2004, 2007, 2008; Enrique-Arias, 2008, 2014a; Wesch, 1997), a phenomenon that seems to be due to the structural asymmetry of the expression of future in the two languages involved as Catalan does not have a periphrastic future with *ir* 'go'.

Until Blas Arroyo's (2007, 2008) study came about, the alleged robustness of morphological future in the Spanish spoken in Catalan-speaking territories had only been mentioned in a handful of studies (cf. Blas Arroyo, 2004, p. 1068; Wesch, 1997) and there was only one preliminary empirical study (Ramírez & Blas Arroyo, 2000). Blas Arroyo conducted the first systematic variationist study on the influence of Catalan contact on the use of Spanish futures in the community of Castellón. He compared Catalan-dominant versus Spanish-dominant bilinguals to find that indeed the former retain MF more than the latter. He did not consider, however, data from monolingual areas of Spain, which leaves us with the question of whether the retention of MF is a peninsular trait or something that only happens in Catalan-speaking areas. There is another variationist study done on Peninsular Spanish, in the Andalusian community of Puente Genil (Osborne, 2008) which exhibits much lower frequency of MF, but Osborne's study is not entirely comparable as she uses different methodology and looks at different variables.

In view of the insufficient empirical evidence regarding the distribution of futures in Peninsular Spanish, and more specifically the alleged effect of Catalan contact in the inhibition of the spread of PF, this investigation aims to explore further the influence of Catalan-Spanish bilingualism in the variable expression of futurity in Spanish. To that effect we carry out a contrastive study that compares a peninsular monolingual community (Alcalá de Henares, a city of 200,000

inhabitants that lies 20 miles northeast of Madrid) and a bilingual one (Palma, a city of 400,000 inhabitants located in the Catalan-speaking island of Majorca). To ensure the validity of our contrastive analysis we use two comparable corpora compiled following PRESEEA guidelines, and apply the same methodology, considering identical predictor variables. The study centers around two internal factor groups explored in previous studies of the expression of futurity (temporal proximity to the speech act, and sentence modality) as well as gender, age, level of schooling and, in the case of the data collected in Palma, language dominance. Beyond the empirical value of our contrastive approach in testing the effect of Catalan contact in the inhibition of the spread of PF, our study is relevant because it studies the distribution of futures in two communities that have not been studied so far, thus contributing to a better knowledge of a seldom studied variable in peninsular Spanish. Although Blas Arroyo and Osborne present their results in terms of multivariate logical regression analysis and we use tokens and percentages, we are confident that our results are valuable in that they complement previous studies.

This chapter is structured as follows. First, we provide a brief overview of the mechanisms that facilitate the inhibition or deceleration of a change in language-contact situations. Then we explain the data sources and methodology used in this study, in particular our intention of contrasting comparable data from monolingual and bilingual varieties to examine the effect of Catalan language contact in the evolution of the Spanish future forms. In the next section we present the results to then conclude with some observations about the relevance of our comparative approach in the empirical establishment of contact-induced change.

## **2. Contact and inhibition of change**

While change is widely considered to be a common result of language contact (Thomason, 2001, p. 10), very little attention has been given to alternative scenarios, such as when bilingualism favors the retention of traditional features that are receding in monolingual varieties. As Enrique-Arias explains (2010, pp. 100–102) the mechanism that facilitates this often overlooked outcome is fairly straightforward: when there is a change in progress (i.e. an innovative variant is increasing its frequency and encroaching on new contexts), the traditional variant may be reinforced amongst bilingual speakers by (a) the existence of a parallel structure in the contact language and/or (b) the absence of a structural equivalent for the innovative variant in the contact language. In such cases change could be delayed, and thus the spread of the innovative variant would progress more slowly than in non-contact varieties of the same language. Enrique-Arias (2010, pp. 101–102) illustrates this mechanism with the evolution of three phonetic phenomena in the

Spanish spoken in Mallorca. The phenomenon known as *yeísmo* (the loss of the phoneme /ɣ/ and its merger into the phoneme /j/) is a trend that has become part of the dominant urban speech pattern in Peninsular Spanish, but the existence of a more robust distinction between /ɣ/ and /j/ in Catalan apparently has the effect of slowing down this change in Majorcan Spanish. In Romera's study in Palma, speakers with Catalan as L1 exhibited considerably higher levels of conservation of the distinction compared to those classified as Spanish L1 (Romera, 2003, pp. 371–372). In the same study, another widespread phenomenon in the Spanish speaking world, the weakening of /s/ in syllable-final position, exhibits a similar distribution: speakers classified as Catalan-dominant exhibit a higher level of maintenance of /s/. Again, the reason is that final syllable [s], which tends to weaken in many Spanish dialects, is rather robust in Catalan. The same is true of the weakening and loss of [d] in words ending in *[-ado]*, a tendency in general Spanish which in the case of Catalan-dominant bilinguals is curbed by the opposite tendency in Catalan, where the equivalent structure employs a sound articulated with higher tension (Blas Arroyo, 2007, pp. 269–270; Romera, 2003, p. 373). In sum, contact-induced change is not the only consequence of language contact: alternate outcomes, including the retention of conservative variants or the inhibition or slowing down of a change, are also possible.<sup>1</sup>

The mechanism that we have illustrated effectively predicts that, even though the substitution of the morphological future by the periphrastic one is virtually a pan-Hispanic trend, the structural asymmetry of the expression of future in Catalan and Spanish will favor the retention of the morphological future in those communities in which the two languages are in a contact situation. Both Catalan and Spanish share the widespread Romance MF derived from the Latin periphrasis *infinitive* + HABere 'to have' (AMARE HABeo > *amar-é* 'I will love'). Nevertheless, unlike Spanish, which has developed a new PF with *ir* 'go', the literal Catalan equivalent, that is, the periphrasis with *anar* 'go', is used for the expression of preterite actions and states. This asymmetry is quite evident if we look at dialectal data: in Lara Bermejo's (2016, p. 545) map with the distribution of future forms in Ibero-Romance varieties, the PF is non-existent in Catalan-speaking areas including Majorca, while it is widespread in the Portuguese, Galician, Leonese,

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1. Enrique-Arias (2010, pp. 102–103) further suggests that these structural factors may be reinforced when the language in question, as has been traditionally the case with Spanish in Majorca, is the socially dominant one, which means that it is acquired and used in formal contexts. As Spanish textbooks and grammars tend to only include the MF, and in general written sources make higher use of this form, Catalan speakers that learn Spanish through formal registers (i.e. schooling, printed material, mass media) have limited exposure to the innovative variant and are thus less likely to use it in their speech.

Castilian and Aragonese areas. The result of this asymmetry is that, while all varieties of Spanish have shown a historical tendency to replace the MF with the periphrasis with *ir*, bilingual Catalan speakers tend to retain it more. Blas Arroyo's (2007, 2008) detailed study of the distribution of future forms in the Spanish of the Catalan-speaking region of Castellón provides empirical support for this hypothesis: speakers that are Catalan-dominant exhibit systematically higher percentages of use of the morphological future. In short, this is a case in which the outcome of language contact is not the acceleration of a change but rather the inhibition or deceleration of a change that is taking place in non-contact varieties (Enrique-Arias, 2010, pp. 104–105, 2014a, pp. 290–291, 2019).

The effect of Catalan language contact on the retention of the morphological future in Majorca has also been studied from a diachronic perspective. Enrique-Arias (2014a, 2008) examined the historical evolution of the distribution of the two future forms to see whether the Spanish-language documents produced in Majorca exhibit a slower tendency towards the adoption of the innovative form, that is, of the PF. To this end he looked at the relative frequencies of future forms in Aaron (2010), which represents the most complete work on the historical evolution of Spanish future forms in peninsular Spanish and compared them to those of Majorcan documents produced by Catalan–Spanish bilinguals. Aaron (2010) analyzed a number of literary texts from several historical periods in the modern era (we leave aside Medieval Spanish as there is an insignificant number of examples of the periphrastic future in that period): (a) the beginning of the 17th century, (b) the end of the 18th century to the beginning of the 19th century and (c) the end of the 20th century to the early 21st century. As for texts produced by Catalan–Spanish bilinguals, Enrique-Arias uses a collection of over a hundred personal letters dated between 1739–1788 from the Cecilia Zaforteza epistolary archive (for a description see Enrique-Arias, 2014b) and court testimonies from some thirty legal cases in the Royal Court of Palma dated between 1769 and 1841. In terms of results, Aaron's corpus registers 4.3% periphrastic future in the 17th and 18th centuries combined and 13.1% in the 19th century (Aaron, 2010, p. 5). A comparison of these results with the available data for the Spanish of bilingual Majorcans effectively suggests that there is indeed a slower evolution of this phenomenon among speakers of the contact variety. In the private 18th century letters, Enrique-Arias registered 210 examples of the MF as opposed to only two examples of the PF. Similarly, the presence of the PF in the court documents is minimal: out of 132 occurrences of future forms found in the 18th-century texts, none is the PF, and in the 19th-century documents there are only two examples in comparison to 166 occurrences of the synthetic future (in other words, the percentage of periphrastic future usage is less than 1%). Table 1 presents a summary comparison of both corpora:

**Table 1.** Historical evolution of the expression of future in monolingual and bilingual areas

<b>Century</b>	<b>Monolingual writers (Aaron, 2010)</b>	<b>Bilingual writers (Enrique-Arias 2014a)</b>
17–18	4.3% (59/1367)	0.07% (2/280)
19	13.1% (77/588)	1.2% (2/168)
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.9% (136/1955)</b>	<b>0.09% (4/448)</b>

$\chi^2 = 24.425; p < .000$

Enrique-Arias (2014a) acknowledged that there are comparability problems between the two corpora regarding dating of the chosen texts, as well as the distribution of textual genres. At any rate the comparison of the global data from each corpus seems to confirm the hypothesis that contact with Catalan would have had the effect of slowing down the development of the periphrastic future in the Spanish of bilinguals: whereas by the 19th century the PF represents 13.1% of future forms in monolingual peninsular Spanish, the innovative form is virtually absent in the Majorcan corpus (1.2%). Moreover, the temporal reference in the four PF examples contained in the Majorcan corpus corresponds to events very near the moment of enunciation such as when a reference is made to an action that the speaker is about to undertake; that is, there is an inchoative aspectual value that expresses a preparatory phase of the verbal action, a usage not unknown to Catalan (*anem a veure* ‘let’s see’).

**3. Corpus and methodology**

The data used in this study are made of the future indicative (MF) and the periphrastic future (PF) forms used to express future events in 108 sociolinguistic interviews belonging to two different speech communities in Spain: Alcalá de Henares, a Spanish monolingual community near Madrid, and Palma de Majorca, a Spanish-Catalan bilingual community in the Balearic Islands. We are aware that present indicative is also used to express future events, and this variable has been included in other studies, but we have decided to limit our investigation to the future tense forms in order to follow the methodology used in Blas Arroyo’s (2008) study as closely as possible.

The Alcalá interviews were collected within the PRESEEA project in the 1990s – some in 1991 and most of them in 1998 – while the Palma interviews, also part of the PRESEEA project, were carried out at a later date, between 2007 and 2010. Both sets of informants were selected using identical sampling based on quotas of sex, age, and level of education (for the PRESEEA project methodological guidelines see <http://preseea.linguas.net/>). In each community the 54 participants are equally divided between men and women distinguishing three age groups and three education levels, as summarized in Table 2.



**Table 2.** Distribution of participants according to social variables in Palma and Alcalá

	First age group (18–34 years)		Second age group (35–55 years)		Third age group (+55 years)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Education level (primary)	3	3	3	3	3	3
Education level (secondary)	3	3	3	3	3	3
Education level (college)	3	3	3	3	3	3

In addition, the Palma participants were selected distinguishing three levels of language dominance; the levels were determined according to a survey of biographical data and language use. Therefore, the three participants in each cell (see Table 2) corresponded to a Catalan-dominant speaker, a Spanish-dominant one and a balanced bilingual (we included the latter category as we observed that a large number of bilingual speakers in the city of Palma make use of both languages on a daily basis).

Each interview lasted around 45 minutes. Following the methodology designed for the PRESEEA project, a fixed number of thematic modules were introduced during the course of all the interviews. Some of these topics facilitate the appearance of future tense forms with reference to different degrees of temporal distance (plans for the weekend, for vacations, career plans) and also ensure reference to inanimate subjects (predictions about weather in the context of global warming).

As it is well known, the verbal forms employed by the MF and the PF have other uses that do not convey future temporal reference. The MF, for instance, has developed values such as uncertainty, conjecture or probability (Rojo & Veiga, 1999, p. 2895). Likewise, some constructions that use forms of *ir a 'go to'* with an infinitive and thus resemble the PF clearly retain the lexical meaning 'move from a place to another' rather than expressing a future action (e.g. *cuando voy a trabajar...* 'when I go to work'). All such cases, in which the verbal variable did not bear a clear prospective temporal meaning, and consequently the two alternatives were not interchangeable, were discarded in the analysis. In total the corpus contained 1478 valid tokens (836 from Palma and 642 from Alcalá).

We coded the resulting future forms according to two linguistic factors (temporal distance to the speech event and sentence modality) as well as extralinguistic criteria: gender, age, level of education, geographic locality (considering Palma vs. Alcalá), and in the case of Palma, dominant language. For data analysis we used the SPSS statistical package; we generated tables with tokens and percentages and we performed statistical significance tests (chi-squared and *p* values). In the following sections we justify the choice of variables and analyze the results.



4. Results

4.1 Effects of bilingualism in the distribution of variants

Our main objective, as we have explained before, is to explore the influence of Catalan-Spanish bilingualism in the variable expression of futurity in Spanish. Table 3 exhibits the frequency distribution for future time forms in a Catalan-Spanish bilingual setting such as Palma in contrast with the city of Alcalá de Henares where Catalan is not spoken. This distribution provides evidence that the MF is considerably stronger in Palma (53.6%) compared to a monolingual Peninsular Spanish community like Alcalá (23.2%). The data in Table 3 also suggest that, despite the report of the slower development of PF in Peninsular Spanish, the frequency registered in Alcalá is very close to that of another peninsular community, Puente Genil (24.8%; cf. Osborne, 2008), with figures that in turn are comparable to what has been reported in Latin America (cf. 28.3% in Barranquilla, Colombia according to Orozco, 2015).<sup>2</sup> At the same time, the rates in Palma are very close to those found by Blas Arroyo (2008) in Castellón, another Catalan-Spanish bilingual community (55.4%).<sup>3</sup>

Table 3. Distribution of future forms in Palma and Alcalá

	Palma	Alcalá
MF	53.6% (448)	23.2% (149)
PF	46.4% (388)	76.8% (493)
Total	100% (836)	100% (642)

$\chi^2$ : 137.94; <.000

The influence of Catalan in the retention of the MF is confirmed by the distribution of futures in the Palma speakers sorted by language dominance (see Table 4). Whereas Spanish-dominant bilinguals use MF the least (42.2%) the opposite is true of the Catalan-dominant ones (61%) while balanced bilinguals lie somewhere in the middle (55.6%).

2. For comparability sake, when quoting figures from those studies, such as Osborne (2008) or Orozco (2015) which consider three variants (MF, PF and present tense) we recalculate percentages discarding present tense occurrences.

3. This percentage has been calculated considering Blas Arroyo's (2008, pp. 91–93) figures in his first count, in which he considered all valid occurrences of MF and PF, just like we do in our study. Blas Arroyo undertook a second count in which he considered only those occurrences that appeared isolated in discourse, and this brought down the percentage of MF to 46%, still quite high if compared to monolingual varieties of Spanish.

**Table 4.** Distribution of future forms in Palma sorted by language dominance

	Spanish	Both	Catalan	TOTAL
MF	42.2% (106)	55.6% (154)	61.0% (188)	53.6% (448)
PF	57.8% (145)	44.4% (123)	39.0% (120)	46.4% (388)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100% (251)</b>	<b>100% (277)</b>	<b>100% (308)</b>	<b>100% (836)</b>

$\chi^2 = 20.341; p < .000$

Blas Arroyo (2008) also considered language dominance in his study. First, he divided his participants into three groups according to place of origin: speakers from rural districts in Castellón province, urban residents from the city of Castellón, and immigrants born in Spanish monolingual areas that had moved to the province only after adolescence. This classification was done under the assumption that the diverse provenance of his informants reflects three different levels of Catalan dominance: the presence and use of Catalan is more prevalent in rural areas compared to the city of Castellón, while Spanish-speaking immigrants use Catalan the least. The percentages of inflectional future in his study (50%, 48% and 39%, respectively) confirm that greater levels of Catalan dominance entail more use of the MF. Likewise, the probabilistic weights exhibit a slight tendency toward the use of MF among rural speakers (0.53) while immigrants from other regions of Spain where Catalan is not spoken clearly disfavor this form (0.37). At the same time, speakers from the city of Castellón lie somewhere in between, at a level that is just about neutral (0.49). These results confirm that the higher density of Catalan speakers in rural areas, as compared to the city of Castellón de la Plana, where Spanish is the more commonly used language, is reflected in the probabilistic data.

Still, Blas Arroyo (2008) conducted a second experiment in which he divided his speakers according to language dominance much in the way we do in our study. Thus he considered two groups: speakers whose dominant language was Spanish, including those who were only passive bilinguals, and speakers whose dominant language was Catalan and who were capable of using Spanish to some degree. The frequency analysis supports the hypothesis that Catalan dominance influences the distribution of future forms: those speakers classified as Catalan dominant exhibit higher rates of use of the MF (53%) vs. 45% for Spanish dominant speakers. The logistic regression analysis, however, only found this factor to be significant when taken in isolation and not when combined with the other factors.

In conclusion, the data presented here support the hypothesis that Catalan bilingualism favors the retention of the MF in Spanish. First, in the two bilingual communities studied (Castellón and Palma) the frequency of use of the MF doubles that of the communities where Catalan is not spoken (Puente Genil and Alcalá); and second, in both Palma and Castellón, those individuals classified as

Catalan-dominant or that live in areas where there is a higher density of Catalan speakers retain the MF with higher frequency compared to speakers who are Spanish-dominant or live in areas where Spanish is used more often.

## 4.2 Internal factors

Once we have established the importance of Catalan-Spanish bilingualism in the retention of the MF, we turn now to see whether the distribution of the futures is influenced by the same internal factors in bilingual and monolingual communities. Previous studies have looked at a great number of internal factors, such as temporal distance, adverbial specification, grammatical person, subject animacy, verb frequency, lexical type, among others. Because of limitations of space, and for the sake of comparability with the only detailed variationist study of peninsular Spanish in contact with Catalan, we will just look at the two internal factors that are most significant in Blas Arroyo's (2008) analysis, namely Temporal proximity and Sentence modality. The first one refers to the temporal distance between the speech act and the event expressed by the verb, a factor that is often understood as the most relevant when it comes to the selection of the MF vs. the PF forms. The PF is often linked to the expression of close or imminent actions or processes, while the MF is supposedly the preferred variant for distant time. In fact, temporal distance turned out to be the most relevant factor according to range in the multivariate analysis in Blas Arroyo (2008) and the third most relevant one in Osborne (2008).

In order to test the relevance of temporal distance in the distribution of future forms in our data, and also with the intention of making our study comparable to what has been observed in peninsular Spanish, both in the bilingual setting of Castellón and in the monolingual one in Puente Genil, we coded the temporal distance for each verb in the corpus according to four categories: immediate, intermediate, maximum and indefinite. *Immediate* events were those that were to take place right away or within the same day, such as (1) below. The *intermediate* category comprised actions that were expected to take place in the seven days (i.e. a week) following the moment of speech, as in (2). An event that was to take place at a future moment more distant than a week was coded as *maximum* distance, as in (3). Finally, any event for which the moment of realization could not be determined, as in (4), was coded as *indefinite*.

- (1) a. *en casa de mis padres, están comiendo allí; ahora iré a recogerlos*  
[speaker 27, Alcalá]  
at my parents' home, they're eating there; I'll go now to pick them up  
b. *¿me vas a preguntar por qué?* [speaker 25, Palma]  
are you going to ask me why?

- (2) a. *estoy estudiando pero bueno, este martes empezaré a trabajar* [speaker 9, Alcalá]  
 I'm studying but, well, this Tuesday I'll start working
- b. *bueno, los va a cumplir el día 1* [speaker 10, Palma]  
 well, his birthday will be on the first of next month
- (3) a. *yo no sé si podré tener vacaciones en Semana Santa todavía* [speaker 37, Palma]  
 I still don't know whether I'll be able to have a vacation at Easter
- b. *me parece que no va a ser acabar la carrera y encontrar trabajo inmediatamente* [speaker 41, Alcalá]  
 it seems to me that it won't be a matter of graduating and finding a job right away
- (4) a. *y si sale la opción de poder ser bombero, me voy a a hacer bombero* [speaker 2, Palma]  
 and if the option to become a firefighter comes out I will become a firefighter
- b. *me voy a morir antes de todo lo que tengo que hacer* [speaker 52, Alcalá]  
 I will die before everything I have to do

These categories coincide to a great extent with the ones used in Blas Arroyo (2008) and Osborne (2008) but with some differences. Blas Arroyo (2008) adds one more category that he terms *attenuated*, corresponding to situations that refer to a distant point in time, but which psychologically display a certain degree of closeness to the moment of speech due to the presence of elements such as the demonstrative *este* 'this' in the immediate linguistic context (*este verano* 'this summer'). Due to the extremely low number – four cases in total – of occurrences of this type in our corpus we have not considered a separate category for attenuated distance. On the other hand, Osborne (2008, p. 34) distinguishes between *immediate distance*, for actions that were to take place right away or within a period of one to two hours after the moment of speech, and *within a day distance*, for events that were to take place within 24 hours. As these two categories fall within the period characterized as *immediate distance* both in Blas Arroyo's (2008) classification and in our own, in our comparisons we have collapsed these two categories under the same one.

As seen in Table 5, the data in Alcalá and Palma exhibit similar tendencies: the MF form is more frequent as the temporal distance increases and is most frequent in the indefinite distance. Thus in Alcalá the percentages are: immediate distance 15%, intermediate distance 18.2%, maximum distance 24.6%, and indefinite distance 28.4%. In the Palma materials we find 42.7%, 26%, 52.5% and 62.6% for the same categories, respectively. The only discordance to this pattern involves immediate distance in Palma, with rates of MF (42.7%) that are actually quite high compared to the intermediate one (26%). This result could be the effect of factors

**Table 5.** Distribution of MF (as opposed to PF) in Alcalá and Palma sorted by temporal distance

	Immediate	Intermediate	Maximum	Indefinite	TOTAL
MF (Alcalá)	15.0% (32/214)	18.2% (4/22)	24.6% (14/57)	28.4% (99/349)	23.2% (149/642)
MF (Palma)	42.7% (91/213)	26.0% (12/46)	52.5% (72/137)	62.6% (273/436)	53.6% (448/836)

Alcalá  $\chi^2 = 13.764$ ;  $p < .003$ ; Palma  $\chi^2 = 12.810$ ;  $p < .000$

not considered in the current investigation. One possibility is that contents in the immediate distance often entail interactions with the interviewer. For instance, in examples such as *es una cosa delicada, te contaré pues hasta donde yo puedo contar* ('this is a sensitive matter, I will only tell you as much as I can' [speaker 33, Palma]), the reference of the form *te contaré* 'I will tell you' is the immediate future; the use of the MF may be a hedging device in the part of the speaker as to not appear too aggressive or imposing in the interaction with the interlocutor. As it is well known (cf. Albelda et al., 2014) modifying verbal tenses is a common hedging mechanism in Spanish and other languages (for instance, in placing requests *quiero* 'I want' is more direct than *quería* 'I wanted', and that is why the latter is commonly used for polite requests); as the MF is associated with greater distance to the moment of enunciation, and also because it can be used to express conjecture, its use results in a less direct and imposing interaction as opposed to using the PF.

The data from Puente Genil and Castellón exhibit a similar pattern (see Table 6).<sup>4</sup> First, just like what we have seen for Palma and Alcalá, the values for MF are always much higher in the bilingual setting of Castellón as opposed to Puente Genil.

**Table 6.** Distribution of MF (as opposed to PF) in Puente Genil and Castellón sorted by temporal distance

	Immediate	Intermediate	Maximum	Indefinite
MF (Puente Genil)	16%	12.5%	46.4%	34.1%
MF (Castellón)	34%	51%	73%	40%

Furthermore, in the contexts that are temporally furthest away from the speech event there are higher rates of MF: 16%, 12.5% and 46.4% respectively for immediate, intermediate and maximum distance in Puente Genil, and 34%, 51% and 73%

4. The Puente Genil data has been adapted from Osborne's (2008) Table 6 in p. 36.

in Castellón. But there are differences as well; in contrast with the results registered in Puente Genil and Castellón, in the Palma and Alcalá data indefinite distance has the highest percentage of MF.

In sum, maximum temporal distance is the context in which the MF is used the most in all four corpora considered. This confirms that even though the percentage of use of the MF will vary considerably between monolingual and bilingual settings all four speech communities studied share the general value of greater temporal distance to the moment of speech associated with the MF.

Next to temporal distance, modality is one of the categories that have been most often considered in studies of the variable expression of future. One dimension of this category involves speaker's attitude, in particular the degree of certainty that the speaker attributes to the content of the utterance; although we acknowledge the relevance of speaker's attitude we find it is a very difficult factor to formalize in objective terms. For this reason, in our study we have opted for analyzing sentence modality – whether the sentence that contains the future form is a statement, interrogation or a command – which can be easily coded using objective criteria. In considering sentence modality, and in accordance with Blas Arroyo's (2008) reasoning, we aim to determine to what extent the speakers' degree of involvement in their utterances as well as their level of certainty as regards their content influences the choice of the future form. As before, and for the sake of comparability, we have adopted the categories in Blas Arroyo (2008, pp. 101–102): affirmative, negative, exclamatory-exhortatory and interrogative, distinguishing between direct and indirect interrogatives. The predictions are as follows: higher levels of emotional involvement should favor the PF; therefore affirmative and interrogative sentences will favor the MF, while exclamatory and exhortatory ones will favor the PF forms. As for negative sentences, although some studies have related them to MF in Canadian French (Poplack & Turpin 1999, p. 154), it has been shown repeatedly that negation does not produce a significant effect favoring the inflectional future in Spanish (cf. Aaron, 2006, p. 267; Durán Urrea & Gradoville, 2006, p. 4; Osborne, 2008, p. 61).

As for the results, in Blas Arroyo's study only affirmative sentences favor the MF (0.56 probability, 51%) while exclamatory-exhortatory ones disfavor it the most (0.27, 27%); the remaining categories lie somewhere in the middle, which bears out the predictions we have established for this category.

The data in our study gives some support to the predictions set forth (see Table 7). Affirmative and indirect interrogatives (which in the grammatical tradition are considered declarative sentences) are the ones that exhibit the highest percentages of MF in both corpora (26.6% and 36.8% respectively in Alcalá, 56.7% and 58.3% in Palma) while exclamative ones exhibit much lower percentages of MF

**Table 7.** Distribution of MF (as opposed to PF) in Alcalá and Palma sorted by modality

	Affirmative	Negative	Interrogative	Indirect Interrogative	Exclamative	TOTAL
MF (Alcalá)	26.6% (130/488)	10.0% (7/70)	4.2% (1/24)	36.8% (7/19)	9.8% (4/41)	23.2% (149/642)
MF (Palma)	56.7% (404/713)	39.8% (35/88)	0% (0/7)	58.3% (7/12)	12.5% (2/16)	53.6% (448/836)

Alcalá  $\chi^2 = 21.103$ ;  $p < .000$ ; Palma  $\chi^2 = 28.514$ ;  $p < .000$

(9.8% in Alcalá, 12.5% in Palma). As for negative polarity items, they do not favor the MF, just like other studies have found. Finally, interrogative sentences exhibit very low percentages of MF, with one case for the entire corpus; this does not allow establishing comparisons with other studies.

4.3 Age, gender and level of instruction

As we have explained before, the decline of the MF and its replacement by the PF is a historical trend that can be traced back to the 1600s. If this change still continues in the two communities considered, then it stands to reason that the distribution of the two variants should be sensitive to sociolinguistic variables such as age, gender and level of instruction. The results show, however, that while this is true for the Palma data, none of these factors reached statistical significance in the Alcalá group (cf. Table 8).

**Table 8.** Distribution of MF (as opposed to PF) in Palma and Alcalá sorted according to sociolinguistic variables

	Palma	Alcalá
Age		
18–55 years	50.8% (286/563)	24.6% (103/418)
56 years and older	59.3% (162/273)	20.5% (46/224)
Palma ( $\chi^2 = 5,050$ ; $p < .024$ ); Alcalá ( $\chi^2 = 1,380$ ; $p < .501$ )		
Gender		
Women	49.5% (199/402)	22.4% (58/258)
Men	57.4% (249/434)	23.6% (91/384)
Palma ( $\chi^2 = 5,198$ ; $p < .023$ ); Alcalá ( $\chi^2 = 0,128$ ; $p < .720$ )		
Education level		
Primary	50.4% (136/270)	27.3% (50/183)
Secondary	49.6% (129/260)	24.8% (60/241)
Post-secondary	59.8% (183/306)	17.8% (39/218)
Palma ( $\chi^2 = 7,527$ ; $p < .023$ ); Alcalá ( $\chi^2 = 5,583$ ; $p < .061$ )		



In regards to age, we should expect that in consonance with the pan-Hispanic tendency towards the encroachment of the PF, older speakers would retain the MF more in their speech when compared to younger speakers. In our study, participants are stratified in three age groups following the PRESEEA methodological guidelines: 18 to 34 years, 35 to 55 years, and over 55 years. Because the younger and middle group exhibited very similar frequencies of MF (50.5% and 51.2% respectively), the analysis distinguishing the three groups was not statistically significant; thus we collapsed these two groups and contrasted the results with the older group, which renders statistically significant results in Palma (in Alcalá the results were not significant regardless of distinguishing three or two age groups). In Palma, speakers that are over 55 years of age use the MF more (59.3%) compared to the younger groups (50.8%), which implies that we should expect a tendency towards lower rates of MF in the future. The other study conducted in a Catalan-Spanish bilingual setting (Blas Arroyo, 2008) presents similar results: after restructuring the age groups from the original four categories to two, speakers under 40 and speakers over 41, Blas Arroyo (2008, p. 112) found that the older speakers favored the MF (55%, 0.55) whereas it was disfavored by those in the younger age groups (44%, 0.41).

The results in peninsular areas where Catalan is not spoken are not as clear; in the Puente Genil study (cf. Osborne, 2008, p. 54) the data indicated that the MF was favored over the present tense by the older (over 50) group of speakers, and in turn the present tense was favored over the MF by the younger (less than 45) group, but there were no statistically significant results indicating that younger speakers favored the PF. And in the Alcalá sample we actually find a tendency that is opposite to that of Palma and Castellón, as we have relatively higher percentages of MF for the younger and middle groups (24.6%) compared to the older one (20.5%), but again this result does not reach statistical significance.

As for gender and level of instruction (our study did not consider social class as a separate category), in Palma the MF is retained more by men (57.4%) compared to women (49.5%), and by college-educated speakers (59.8%) versus individuals with a secondary (49.6%) or primary education (50.4%). Again these results differ from those in Alcalá: first there is hardly a difference between women and men (22.5% and 23.7%, respectively); and second, the MF is retained more by the lower education group (27.3%), followed by the speakers with secondary education (24.9%), and was least used by the college-educated participants (17.9%), exactly the opposite of what we found in Palma, but with results that do not reach statistical significance. If we cross gender and education it turns out that in Palma – we leave out Alcalá as none of these variables are statistically significant – the MF is retained the most by the higher education group both among women (55.6%) and men (64.1%) while the middle and lower groups exhibit lower percentages: for men

it is 57% in the lower group and 49.2% in the middle one; as for women, those with a secondary education retain the MF 50% while participants with only primary education use the traditional variant the least (40.4%).

In Blas Arroyo's (2008) study gender and education level did not reach statistical significance. As for social class, speakers belonging to the highest social stratum (upper middle class) disfavored the MF; this is opposite to what has been observed in other communities, where upper class individuals are the ones that typically display a greater tendency to retain the MF. For instance, the studies by Gutiérrez (1995, 2002) in several communities of Mexican origin show that the rapid advance of the PF at the expense of the MF is driven mainly by the lower classes, a fact that he interprets as a change from below. As we have mentioned already, gender taken in isolation was not significant in Blas Arroyo's (2008) study, but when crossing gender and social class there were some interesting results: the females in higher social positions produced the highest percentages of the PF at the expense of the morphological variant (cf. p. 114).

While it is difficult to extract a clear conclusion from all of the above, some of the general traits presented so far could indicate a change in progress in Palma whereby, as has been attested in many other Spanish speaking areas, the PF is gaining ground at the expense of the MF. The fact that younger and middle-age speakers are using the PF more often compared to the older ones is in agreement with the general pan-Hispanic tendency towards limiting the use of the MF. Likewise, the higher level of MF among educated speakers would confirm that this is the conservative variant, as this form is the most traditional and (presumably) educated form of the future tense in the Spanish verb system. And if indeed there is a change in progress, the relatively higher use of the innovative form by the Palma females would be evidence that, although educated speakers favor the more traditional MF, there are no negative connotations attached to the innovative variant, as this would be a process led by one of the groups that are sensitive to the sociolinguistic prestige attached to the variants.

At the same time, it appears that the use of the PF is quite stable in Alcalá, as none of the sociolinguistic variables considered in our study reached statistical significance. At any rate, the frequency of MF in Alcalá is considerably low (23.2% overall), which makes it hard to become even lower and thus it may be difficult to detect a tendency towards a further reduction of its uses.

## 5. Conclusions

The possible influence of Catalan bilingualism in the retention of the MF had been pointed out in a number of publications but there were only two empirical studies on the issue: Blas Arroyo (2008) had compared different ethnolinguistic groups in the community of Castellón and Enrique-Arias (2014a, 2019) had looked at historical data contrasting texts produced by Castilian writers and Majorcan bilinguals. In order to provide more robust empirical support for the hypothesis that Catalan contact inhibits the spreading of the PF, in this article we conduct for the first time a contrastive study of a bilingual community and a monolingual one, applying the same methodology in regards to data collection and analysis. Our results show that the frequency of use of the MF among Palma bilinguals is double what it is in a non-contact setting such as Alcalá. Additionally, we compare our results with available data from other peninsular communities to find a similar contrast between bilingual Castellón and non-contact Puente Genil.

The quantitative analysis in our study also reveals how certain linguistic factors that had already been detected in previous variationist studies influence the choice of future form. Temporal distance, which is possibly the variable that has been considered most often, appears to work in the same way in the four peninsular communities for which we have data (Palma, Castellón, Alcalá and Puente Genil): the MF is favored in the contexts that are temporally furthest away from the speech event. As for the other linguistic variable that we have examined, sentence modality, Palma and Alcalá yield the same results: affirmative and indirect interrogatives exhibit the highest percentages of MF while exclamative sentences and negative polarity items exhibit lower percentages, which in turn coincides at least partially with what has been found in Castellón. We can thus conclude that, while the frequency of use of the MF will vary considerably between monolingual and bilingual varieties, the different speech communities studied here share the general value of greater temporal distance to the moment of speech associated with the MF.

Finally, we have considered the possibility of a change in progress. In Palma the supposedly innovative variant (i.e. the PF) is favored by younger and middle-aged speakers, by women, and by individuals with primary and secondary education, while the traditional variant is more prevalent with men, older speakers, and speakers with a college degree. This distribution would indicate that, just like in Castellón, there is a tendency of change in progress where the MF is being replaced by the PF, although the sociolinguistic profile of the speakers leading the change differs in the two communities: both in Castellón and Palma the change is led by women but, in contrast to what happens in Castellón, in Palma the conservative variant is more prevalent among the higher social groups.

This tendency of change is consonant with other historical developments in which Catalan contact phenomena in Palma have receded resulting in a process of convergence with general Spanish; traits such as *seseo* (the lack of distinction between the pair of sibilants /s/ and /θ/), or the directional use of the preposition *en* as in *voy en Palma* ('I'm going to Palma') were once widespread in the Spanish of Majorca but are now restricted to rural speakers (Enrique-Arias, 2008, 2019). In contrast with the Palma data, the distribution of the two future forms appears to be quite stable in Alcalá, where none of the sociolinguistic variables reached statistical significance.

We are well aware that, for a complete understanding of the variable use of the future forms, we still need to perform a detailed multivariate analysis which will include other factors such as adverbial specification, grammatical person, subject animacy, verb frequency or lexical type. Likewise, we should include other peninsular and American communities as well as historical data in our analysis. For the time being, however, the contrastive study that we have presented throughout this chapter provides evidence in support of the influence of Catalan contact in the evolution of the Spanish future forms and serves to illustrate the mechanisms through which language contact can result in the retention of conservative variants and the inhibition of changes.

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