

Lost voices:  
sociolinguistic observations  
on the epistemic future  
in two varieties of the same dialect

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**ARC Romance Linguistics Seminars, Cambridge**

October 29, 2020

# Introduction

- **Latin synthetic future** AMABO 'I will love', MORIAM 'I will die' **was lost in the evolution from Latin to Romance.**

(i) Non omnis                      **moriar**                      (Horace)  
not all.NOM.MSG die.FUT.1SG  
'I shall not wholly die.'

- In **Central and Southern Italian dialects** the expressions of future tense include
- innovative forms  
**i.e. verbal periphrases with HABEO 'have' that underwent grammaticalization**  
and became **analytic future forms**, e.g.

HABEO 'have' + prepositions AD/DE(-AB) + infinitive  
- it expresses both futurity and deonticity

# Introduction

- Future tense in Central and Southern Italian dialects:

I. HABEO + prepositions AD/DE(-AB) + infinitive

(1) a. Rumani a **mangiari** a casa (Sicilian, Ragusa)  
tomorrow I.have.to eat.INF at home  
'Tomorrow I'll eat at home'  
(but also : 'Tomorrow I have to eat at home')

b. **As a jèssə** stasira? (Calabrese, S. Maria del Cedro)  
has to go.out.INF this.evening  
'Are you going to go out tonight?'  
(but also : 'Do you have to go out tonight?')

- **Non-factuality** semantically explains the common origin of both future tense and deontic expressions.

## Introduction

- However, central and southern Italian dialects also display an **innovative synthetic future form**.
- It was originated from the same Latin form from which the synthetic future in Romance languages:

<p>(2)</p> <p>a. Elle <b>parlera</b> de moi. (French) she speak.FUT.3SG of me 'She will talk about me.'</p> <p>b. No <b>volverá</b>. (Spanish) not turn.FUT.3SG 'S/he won't come back.'</p>	<p>c. <b>Escreveremos</b> uma carta. (Portuguese) write.FUT.1PL a letter 'We'll write a letter.'</p> <p>d. <b>Andremo</b> da Gianni domani. (standard Italian) go.FUT.1PL to Gianni tomorrow. 'We'll go to Gianni's tomorrow.'</p>
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# Introduction

- Central and southern Italian dialects also display an **innovative synthetic future form**.
- This form stems from same source of the synthetic future we see in other Romance varieties

i.e. Latin infinitive + inflected forms of HAVE

AMAR(E)	+	HA(BE)O	>	<i>amerò</i> (standard Italian)
love.INF		have.1SG.PRS		'I will love'

- Grammaticalization of HABEO 'have'
- old traditional view: central and southern Italian dialects do not show this form
- new investigations showed productive paradigms in central and southern Italian dialects

## Synthetic future: Italian dialects vs the rest of Romance languages

- In Romance languages:
    - the synthetic future expresses **futurity** primarily
    - synthetic future also expresses **epistemic** interpretation
  - Italian dialects:
    - the synthetic future only expresses epistemic interpretation
- **semantic shift:** from futurity to epistemic non-factuality

Latin (different stages)	Romance	
	southern Italian dialects	other varieties
AMABO 'I will love' DORMIAM 'I will sleep'	—	—
HABEO + AD / DE-AB / AD + PARABOLARE	aja parlà (Vbc.) 'I will speak / I have to speak'	c'ho da parla con Gianni (Tusc.) 'I have to talk to Gianni.'
PARABOLARE + HA(BE)O	parlərrajə (Vbc.) 'I might speak'	parlerò (It.) parlerai (Fr.) hablaré (Sp.) 'I will speak'

Vbc.=Verbicarese; Tusc.=Tuscan; It.=Italian; Fr.=French; Sp.=Spanish.

## Today's presentation

- Innovative synthetic future attested not only in standard Italian (and other well-documented Romance languages) but also among southern Italian dialects (SIDs)
  - among SIDs the synthetic future is not consistently attested
  - it is semantically specialized
- Today's focus: **morphology** and **usage** of the synthetic future in two different varieties of a north-western Calabrese dialect spoken in the village of Verbicaro:
  - the indigenous variety spoken in Calabria = **Verbicarese 1**
  - the exported variety spoken in São Paulo, Brazil = **Verbicarese 2**

**NOTE:** I am not going to talk about the diachronic development of the synthetic future (v. Andriani et al. 2020)



## WHERE?



## Today's presentation

- Leading questions
  - What can a comparison between Verbicarese 1 and Verbicarese 2 reveal about the development of the synthetic epistemic future?
  - Do these two varieties represent different stages of the evolution?
  - Can a sociolinguistic investigation shed light on the development of synthetic epistemic future?
  - Is the epistemic future bound to disappear in these varieties?

## Fieldwork details

- Data collected by me through fieldwork in June 2010 in São Paulo.
- Neighborhoods with robust presence of Italian migrants:  
Bixiga, Mooca, Brás
- Emigrated from Calabria to Brazil in the 20th century in two major waves:
  - between WW1 and WW2 ('30s)
  - after WW2 (mostly '50s and '60s)

## Expressions of future tense in Verbicarese

- In both the varieties of Verbicarese future tense expressed through two strategies:
  - (i) **synthetic**: present indicative (+ temporal adverbs with future reference) (2)
  - (ii) **analytic** future formed by 'have' (<HABEO) + prepositions DE-AB + infinitive (3)

(2) Crajə **vajə** alla posta. (Verbicarese 1, 2)

tomorrow I.go to.the post office

'Tomorrow I'll go to the post office.'

(3) Crajə **aja ji** alla posta.

tomorrow I.have.to go to.the post office

'Tomorrow I'll go to the post office.' / 'Tomorrow I'll go to the post office.'

## New evidence from IDs: the epistemic value of the future

- In both Verbicarese 1 and 2 innovative **synthetic future** (< infinitive+HA(BE)O) used with **epistemic value**.
- Non-factual, *irrealis* modality: expression by the speaker of probable truthfulness of the propositional content of the sentence  
=> Subjective evaluation of the possible/probable realization of an event or a state

(4) Immagino che **sarai** felicissima per la promozione. (standard Italian)  
I.imagine that you.will.be very.happy for the promotion  
'(I imagine) you must be very happy about the promotion.'

## Synthetic epistemic future in Verbicarese 1 and 2

- Both varieties of Verbicarese exhibit this formation with this semantic value.
- The two varieties differ based on the attested forms of the paradigm and the diachronic stage of evolution.
- I will refer to this future paradigm as **epistemic future (= EpiFut)**

## EpiFut in Verbicarese 1 (1)

- Paradigm shows two morphological types (Type A and Type B)
- Difference between the two:  
vowel  $[-\epsilon]$ - vs  $[-a]$ - of the verb ending
- Paradigms available only for a small class of verbs (highly frequent?): *be*, *have*, *eat*, *do*, *speak* etc.
- Two forms and two distinct paradigms:
  - (a) *simple* form, expressing non-past tense
  - (b) *compound* form, expressing past tense (= HAVE Aux + PPT)

## EpiFut in context

- (6) a. Q: What time did you go to the fields yesterday, roughly?  
b. A: Avərrejə/avərrajə / avrejə/avrajə juta versə menzəjuərnə  
I.will.have gone around noon  
'I might/must have gone at about noon.'
- (7) a. Q: What time does usually the baby eat?  
b. A: Forsə mandzərreja/mandzərraja mmarə i dujə.  
maybe she.will.eat around the two  
'Maybe she eats at about two.'



## EpiFut future in **Verbicarese 1** (2)

Table 1: epistemic synthetic future in Verbicarese 1 (‘have’, ‘be’)

	<i>have</i>		<i>be</i>	
	<b>Type A</b>	<b>Type B</b>	<b>Type A</b>	<b>Type B</b>
SG 1	avərrejə (jutə)	avərrajə (jutə)	*	*
	‘I will have (gone)’ <sup>1</sup>			
2	avərrejəsə (jutə)	avərrajəsə (jutə)	*	*
	‘you will have (gone)’			
3	avərrejədə (jutə)	avərrajədə (jutə)	sərrejədə	sərrajədə
	‘s/he will have (gone)’		‘s/he / it will be’	
PL 1	avərrejəmə (jutə)	avərrajəmə (jutə)	*	*
	‘we will have (gone)’			
2	avərrejəzə (jutə)	avərrajəzə (jutə)	*	*
	‘you will have (gone)’			
3	avərrejənə (jutə)	avərrajənə (jutə)	sərrejənə	sərrajənə
	‘they will have (gone)’		‘they will be’	

## EpiFut in **Verbicarese 1** (3)

Table 2: epistemic synthetic future in Verbicarese 2 (‘eat’, ‘be born’)

	<i>eat</i>		<i>be born</i>	
	<b>Type A</b>	<b>Type B</b>	<b>Type A</b>	<b>Type B</b>
SG 1	*	*	*	*
2	*	*	*	*
3	mandzərrejədə	mandzərrajədə	naʃʃərrejədə	naʃʃərrajədə
	‘s/he / it will eat’		‘nascerà’	
PL 1	*	*	*	*
2	*	*	*	*
3	mandzərrejənə	mandzərrajənə	naʃʃərrejənə	naʃʃərrajənə
	‘they will eat’		‘they will be born’	

## EpiFut in Verbicarese 1 (4)

- Simple form only available for a **closed list** of verbs  
( => next slide)
  - therefore **non-productive**
- Compound form available virtually for **all verbs**, given a full competence of morphological formation (HAVE Aux + PPtp)<sup>2</sup>
  - therefore potentially **productive**!

<sup>2</sup> Aux= Auxiliary; PPtp = Past Participle

## EpiFut in Verbicarese 1 (5)

- Simple form only available for a closed list of a few verbs

	Verb		EpiFut available?
<b>I</b>	man'dʒa	to eat	Y
	'naʃfə	to be born	Y
	par'la	to speak/talk	Y
	və'ni	to come	Y
	'skrivə	to write	Y
<b>II</b>	camə'na	to walk	N
	'tʃandʒə	to cry	N
	'lɛddʒə	to read	N
	ji	to go	N
	la'va	to wash	N
	<b>ETC!</b>		N
<b>III</b>	klək'ka	to click (on a screen)	N
	skannərəd'dza	to scan	N
	tʃətofu'nwa	to ring the intercom	N

## EpiFut in Verbicarese 2

- A subgroup of speakers of Verbicarese 2 formed the EpiFut of 'have' on the stem **avr-** (Table 3, **Type C**).
- In Verbicarese 2 **unaccusative verbs** can select **BE as an auxiliary**:
  - crucial morphosyntactic difference with respect to Verbicarese 1, where only HAVE is selected as an auxiliary across the board.

EpiFut in Verbicarese 2:  
same semantic value as Verbicarese 1

- (8) a. Q: What time do you think they called yesterday?  
b. A: Avrèjənə/Avrajənə chiamatə a matina.  
have.FUT.3PL called the morning  
'I think they called in the morning.'
- (9) a. Q: Who do you think will eat with us tomorrow?  
b. A: tʃə mandzərrèjəmə/mandzərrajəmə ji e Pascalə  
there.OBL eat.FUT.1PL I and e Pasquale  
'I think that I and Pasquale will eat there.'

Table 3. Paradigms of epistemic synthetic future in Verbicarese 2 ('have', 'be')

	<i>have</i>			<i>be</i>	
	<b>Type A</b>	<b>Type B</b>	<b>Type C</b>	<b>Type A</b>	<b>Type B</b>
SG1	avərrejə	avərrajə	avrejə/avrajə jutə	sərrejə (jutə)	sərrajə (jutə)
	'I will have'		'I will have gone'	'I will be gone'	
2	avərrejəsə	avərrajəsə	avrejəsə/avrajəsə jutə	sərrejəsə (jutə)	sərrajəsə (jutə)
	'you will have'		'you will have gone'	'you will be gone'	
3	avərrejədə	avərrajədə	avrejədə/avrajədə jutə	sərrejədə (jutə)	sərrajədə (jutə)
	's/he / it will have'		's/he / it will have gone'	's/he / it will be gone'	
PL1	avərrejəmə	avərrajəmə	avrejəmə/avrajəmə jutə	sərrejəmə (jutə)	sərrajəmə (jutə)
	'we will have'		'we will have gone'	'we will be gone'	
2	avərrejəzə	avərrajəzə	avrejəzə/avrajəzə jutə	sərrejəzə (jutə)	sərrajəzə (jutə)
	'you will have'		'you will have gone'	'you will be gone'	
3	avərrejənə	avərrajənə	avrejənə/avrajənə jutə	sərrejənə (jutə)	sərrajənə (jutə)
	'they will have'		'they will have gone'	'they will be gone'	

Table 4. Paradigms of epistemic synthetic future in Verbicarese 2 ('eat', 'be born')

	<i>eat</i>		<i>be born</i>	
	<b>Type A</b>	<b>Type B</b>	<b>Type A</b>	<b>Type B</b>
SG 1	mandzərrejə	mandzərrajə	naɸɸərrejə	naɸɸərrajə
	'I will eat'		'I will be born'	
2	mandzərrejəsə	mandzərrajəsə	naɸɸərrejəsə	naɸɸərrajəsə
	'you will eat'		'you will be born'	
3	mandzərrejədə	mandzərrajədə	naɸɸərrejədə	naɸɸərrajədə
	's/he / it will eat'		's/he / it will be born'	
PL 1	mandzərrejəmə	mandzərrajəmə	naɸɸərrejəmə	naɸɸərrajəmə
	'we will eat'		'we will be born'	
2	mandzərrejəzə	mandzərrajəzə	naɸɸərrejəzə	naɸɸərrajəzə
	'you will eat'		'you will be born'	
3	mandzərrejənə	mandzərrajənə	naɸɸərrejənə	naɸɸərrajənə
	'they will eat'		'they will be born'	



## Verbicarese 2

Data collected in 2010 reveal:

- Verbicarese 2 keeps some verb forms lost in Verbicarese 1
- Verbicarese 2  $\neq$  Verbicarese 1
  - aux HAVE with reduced forms in Verbicarese 2
  - aux BE selected with inaccusative verbs: *unicum* in the system of Verbicarese that otherwise only shows Aux HAVE
- Verbicarese 2  $=$  Verbicarese 1
  - Same stage of evolution: a form born with the value of futurity now used with epistemic value only.

## Verbicarese 2: three different groups of speakers

- Distinct acquisitional scenarios depending on the role of Verbicarese in the speakers' competence.
- Verbicarese **Heritage** Speakers:
  - Verbicarese was initially acquired as L1, but the acquisition process was interrupted, and the speaker never reached the full competence.
  - Verbicarese was fully acquired as L1 but the speakers have ceased to speak it in favor of a dominating L2 (Rothman 2009:156).
  - Attrition effects: The sum of the effects of a dominating language on the heritage language (Köpke and Schmid 2004:5).

Verbicarese 2: three different sub-groups of speakers represented by a typical but fictitious speaker

### ***I. Enrichetta***

85 years-old in 2010, migrated to S. Paulo with the whole family when she was 7.

She understands Portuguese but she employs it very rarely.

*Enrichetta* also partially acquired regional Italian from Calabria.

She is married to a man from Verbicaro.

They always spoke only Verbicarese at home. Her social interactions occur almost exclusively within the Verbicarese community of her neighborhood.

*Enrichetta* never went back to Verbicaro, her hometown.

She is a Verbicarese L1 speaker. Verbicarese has always been her dominating language.

In 2010 she represented the 'depository' of the variety of Verbicarese spoken in homeland Verbicaro in the 30s of '900.

Verbicarese 2: three different sub-groups of speakers represented by a typical fictitious speaker

ii. **Vito**

65 years-old in 2010. Migrated from Verbicaro to S. Paulo with his brothers when he was 15.

*Vito* partially acquired standard Italian through schooling before migrating.

Once in Brazil, he acquired Portuguese as L2.

*Vito* married a Brazilian woman. At home they always spoke Portuguese.

He goes back to Verbiciaro every 3 years for 2 months ca.

*Vito* is a Verbicarese L1 and Portuguese L2 speaker.

His competence of Verbicarese exhibits **attrition** phenomena due to Portuguese.

(Also, it is very likely that his Portuguese shows cases of *transfer* from Verbicarese.)

Verbicarese 2: **three** different sub-groups of speakers represented by a typical fictitious speaker

iii. ***Franca***

50 years-old in 2010, she was born in S. Paulo from Verbicarese parents.

*Franca* never acquired standard Italian; she rarely used regional Italian from Calabria.

In her childhood home both Verbicarese and Portuguese were spoken.

*Franca* was therefore exposed to a bilingual environment during her critical age of language acquisition.

Yet, she used Verbicarese in a limited way and only at home.

*Franca* married a Brazilian and she mingled with Verbicarese people very rarely. She never went back to Verbicaro

*Franca* is a *heritage speaker* of Verbicarese.

## How do these three subgroups employ the epistemic future?

- **Subgroup I** (*Enrichetta*, L1 Verbicarese): the only subgroup that preserves the full paradigms of the epistemic future for a number of highly frequent verbs.
- **Subgroup II** (*Vito*): most speakers produced only the complete paradigm of HAVE and BE; they used it with the epistemic value.
  - This scenario echoes the actual use of the epistemic future in the indigenous variety of Verbicarese, where it is employed productively only by a handful of speakers (with some restrictions).

## How do these three subgroups employ the epistemic future?

- **Subgroup III**(*Franca*): Although they recognize the epistemic future as part of the system, they never spontaneously employed it.
  - Speakers of Subgroup III of Verbicarese behave like the majority of speakers of Verbicarese 1 born after 1965:
    - they do not produce it but, if asked, they recognize it as part of their language.
  - The incomplete grammar of the epistemic future is the *trait-d'union* between Verbicarese 1 and Verbicarese 2
    - it pulls together the heritage speakers of Verbicarese 2 with the majority of speakers of Verbicarese 1

## Reverse metalinguistic awareness of heritage speakers

- *heritage speakers* exhibit the phenomenon of «**reverse metalinguistic awareness**» (Benmamoun et al. 2010:18):
  - those who thought about their language in a more abstract way and whose competence was higher would identify themselves as weak and «bad» speakers
  - vice versa speakers whose competence was very attrited and did not have metalinguistic thoughts bragged about being very fluent speakers of Verbicarese
- Morphosyntax (especially inflected morphology) represent the domains of a heritage grammar which are most affected by attrition (Silva-Corvalán 1994; Håkansson 1995; Montrul 2007; Montrul, Foote e Perpiñan 2008; Polinsky 2006, 2008).



**Table 5**

3 different degrees of competence of the epistemic future are co-mapped between the speakers of Verbicarese 1 and the speakers of Verbicarese 2.

	Parallel $\alpha$	Parallel $\beta$	Parallel $\gamma$
	Complete paradigm of HAVE and BE and other frequently used verbs.	Complete paradigm of HAVE; complete/defective paradigms of some highly frequent verbs.	Lack of usage of epistemic future; ability to interpret it.
<b>Verbicarese 1</b>	?	Speakers born before 1965.	Speakers born after 1965.
<b>Verbicarese 2</b>	Dominating Verbicarese L1  (Subgroup I)	Non-dominating Verbicarese L1; dominating L2  (Subgroup II)	Verbicarese heritage speakers  (Subgroup III)

## Final remarks (1)

- Comparison between two contemporary varieties of the same dialects shed light of the morphosyntax and use of a rare verb form.
- Indigenous variety of Verbicarese shows a full use of the EpiFut only by speakers born before 1965.
- The exported variety of Verbicarese spoken in São Paulo shows a more complex scenario with different layers of linguistic competence which is reflected in the use of the epistemic future.

## Final remarks (2)

- Comparing the two varieties showed that the L1 speakers of the exported variety preserve an intact paradigm which display features now lost in the indigenous variety.
- The grammar of the the L1 speakers of the exported variety reflects the competence of speakers of the indigenous variety of the first half of the '900.
- **Nothing is really lost!**
  - The lost forms of simple EpiFut in Verbicarese 1 are still found in Verbicarese 2
  - *Simple* form of EpiFut likely to disappear soon
  - *Compound* form of EpiFut might not follow the same route
    - EpiFut paradigm of Aux is solid
    - PPtp is available in the grammar of all speakers for all verbs

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