

IT'S No Go FOR THE ITALIAN FUTURE*

Carol El-Char

1. Introduction

This article will take a **look** at the range of terms for expressing the future tense in Contemporary Italian. The evolution of the Italian synthetic future from its Latin origins, and the use of various analytic futures, will be explored from a panchronic viewpoint within the framework of grammaticization theory (for a detailed discussion see El-Char 1994; for more on a panchronic approach, see Heine, Claudi & Hünnemeyer 1991, Chapter 9). It will also be demonstrated that the current (non-temporal) uses for which the future gram¹ is employed are not so unusual when viewed in light of this grammaticization process. Perhaps of most interest is that Italian, unlike other Contemporary Romance languages such as Spanish and French, does not have a documented go-future. The use of the present tense, to render a future meaning, is quite common, while the use of the synthetic future marker for this same purpose is not, I will attempt to provide some reasons for this curious situation based on the available evidence.

2. Background

2.1 Grammaticization

Grammaticization is a historical process, with synchronic ramifications, which results in lexical items acquiring grammatical functions, and grammatical items becoming more grammatical (Kurylowicz 1975:196-52, cited in Heine et al. 1991:3). Other terms used to describe the same chain of events such as “bleaching” (Lord 1976:183, 189), “semantic depletion” and “desemanticization” (Lehmann 1982:127), and “generalization or weakening of semantic content” (Bybee & Pagliuca 1985:60) have tended to focus on the loss of lexical semantic content, and as such they fail to capture the fact that the loss in lexical content is accompanied by a gain in grammatical content and also frequently a gain in pragmatic meaning (see Traugott 1990:499, and elsewhere). The shift from lexical to grammatical meaning occurs via a generalization of meaning, which is concomitant with phonological reduction of the form, usually a loss of stress, and the possible eventual fusion of the form with the head of the phrase. Often the gram will develop from a periphrastic expression into an affix, giving rise to increased allomorphy as a result of the phonologically conditioned changes at the morpheme boundary (Hopper & Traugott 1993:103).

Various “clines of grammaticality” are useful in understanding the stages through which a lexical item passes as it becomes more grammatical. Two of these, having relevance to this discussion, involve a verbal cline and a cognitive cline. At the left of any cline (representing a point early in the gram’s history) we see the gram as a lexical item. As it progresses rightwards (forwards in time) it moves towards a more grammatical state. The following “verb-to-affix” cline is taken from Hopper & Traugott (1993:108ff): FULL VERB > AUXILIARY > CLITIC > AFFIX. The stages represented along this cline correlate with the features for high degrees of grammaticization, as given above

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¹ The term “gram” is adopted from Bybee *et al.* 1991:18, and is shortened from grammatical morpheme.

The second cline which I will present has been proposed by Traugott (principally 1982 and elsewhere), and also in conjunction with others (Hopper & Traugott 1993; Traugott & König 1991). From this perspective, language is seen primarily in terms of discourse pragmatics, and the focus is on the changing meanings and functions of lexical items as they grammaticize. Traugott has suggested that the following tendencies are typical of semantic change (1989:34 *et passim*): PROPOSITIONAL> ((TEXTUAL)> (EXPRESSIVE)). A lexical item will develop from having propositional content - where its meaning is based in the context of the whole situation under description; to having a textual function - where **it** serves to connect ideas within the proposition, such as connectives, anaphoric markers, and speech-act verbs; and/or to having purely expressive content, where it gains in pragmatic meaning and speaker subjectivity, for example concessives. As is also true of the verbal cline depicted further above, the rightmost stages along the cognitive cline correlate with the features for highly grammaticized items. They also contain a higher degree of the speaker's attitude to the proposition.

An example of these cognitive phases in progress is seen in the case of Old English *hwile* 'while', as used in the expression *fa hwile fe* 'at the time that'. Today, *while* has become very limited in its use as a noun (with propositional content) surviving in such expressions as ***all the while, wait a while, for a while***. Instead, it is more commonly used as a conjunction with the temporal meaning 'during' (having a textual function) e.g. 'I struggled to write this chapter while Felipe was singing Michael Bolton songs', and is also evolving into a subordinating conjunction having concessive meaning, 'while I managed to get it done, I think I'll invest in some earplugs' (expressive function). In the latter sentence *while* can be replaced with *although*, and carries the attitude of the speaker towards the situation - i.e. it has 'expressive' meaning. This is an example of semantic change involving the strengthened belief-state of the speaker (Hopper & Traugott 1993: Chapter 4; Traugott 1982:254, and elsewhere; Traugott & König 1991:191). As will be shown later, this cline has special relevance to markers of the future, which in essence are predictions (based on pragmatic factors) made by the speaker.

Several notions are central to the above clines. The positions along them are not discrete and bounded phases in the life of a morpheme. Neither does the lexical form of a gram necessarily disappear, nor its lexical use become redundant, once the item begins to move along this path. As demonstrated by the following example from Ewe, it is possible that at various stages the lexical item will continue to be in use in the language alongside its grammaticized form:² *épe megbé fá* 'his **back** is cold'; *é-leo xo á megbé* 'he is **behind** the house'; *é-kú le é-megbé* 'he died **after** him' (Heine *et al.* 1991:65f.).

Also central to these clines (and, by implication, to the grammaticization process) is the notion of unidirectionality, which proposes that elements move along the cline (i.e. grammaticize) in a left-to-right fashion and never back the other way. Evidence to support this has been provided by many sources (Bybee, Pagliuca and Perkins 1994 and elsewhere; Home *et al.* 1991; Hopper & Traugott 1993 Lehmann 1982:16ff; Traugott 1982 and elsewhere; Traugott & König 1991; Ultan 1978:114 *et passim*).

² Ewe is from the Kwa branch of the Niger Congo family, and is spoken in eastern Ghana, southern logo, and southern Benin. The examples from Ewe involving *megbé* 'back adhere to a set of principles formulated by Hopper (1991), from which article further information can be obtained.

2.2 Futures

Two predominant sources of future grams have been identified by Bybee *et al.* 1994, in a study conducted into seventy-five of the world's languages. "Primary" grams are lexical items signifying agent-oriented modalities (these include verbs of possession and being), movement verbs and temporal adverbs, and had a higher rate of occurrence than "aspectual" grams, which are items signifying the present tense or either perfective or imperfective aspect. Distinctive "paths" of development have been proposed for each future marker, and one which is especially applicable to this discussion is the path given for obligative modals (Bybee *et al.* 1994:322):

(‘BE, BECOME’,,) > (OBLIGATION) > INTENTION > FUTURE (PREDICTION)
(‘HAVE’, POSSESSION) (PREDESTINATION)

As well as ascertaining that the individual lexical items followed their respective paths towards a future meaning, the study also found that future grams may continue to grammaticize beyond a purely temporal use and may eventually develop specific epistemic modal meanings (see also Bybee & Pagliuca 1987 for discussion on this). These modal meanings are limited in number, and will be discussed later in this article. One lucid example from Pennsylvania German, a dialect of German, is shown here:

(1) Er waert es hawwe
he FUT it has
he probably has it³ (source: Kate Burridge, p.c.)

While in Standard German this sentence has a future reading, ‘he will have it, in Pennsylvania German it no longer signifies the future as it once did, but instead expresses probability or supposition as its primary meaning. This is a clear example of increased speaker involvement or speaker subjectivity which results from increased grammaticization (cf. Traugott 1982; Hopper & Traugott 1993; Traugott & König 1991).

In the next section, a synopsis of the future tense terms in Latin will be given, as a backdrop to the main part of this article.

3. The future in Latin

The following is a discussion of the different ways of expressing the future in Latin, providing a background to the later investigation of future markers in Contemporary Italian. The following time-line for Latin is reproduced from Fleischman 1982 (p.1 66, n.7 and pp 168-9, n.26):

- Classical Latin: mid-i St century BC to **AD** 14.
- post-Classical: **AD** 14 to ca. **AD** 200.
- Late Latin (this refers to the written language) also called later spoken Latin⁴ (this refers to the popular spoken variety): ca. AD 200 to the beginning of Romance speech.
- Medieval Latin: a written form of Latin constructed from the consolidation of the Romance vernaculars through the medieval period.

The Romance languages began to evolve from Common Romance between the 7th and 9th centuries AD (Dardano & Trifone 1990:21).

³ *waert* itself is derived from the Standard German verb *werden* become.

⁴ I will use here the term “later spoken Latin” instead of “Vulgar Latin”, in deference to Fleischman 1982:168, n.26, who believes that the latter term has often been misused since it makes neither sociolinguistic nor period distinctions.

3.1 Synthetic future

Latin had several expressions for indicating the future tense, both synthetic and analytic. In the first two of the four conjugations, the synthetic future” was formed by the addition of the suffix *-b-* to the verb stem, followed by the relevant person/number inflection. For example *habere* to have, which belonged to the second conjugation, was inflected as follows:

(2)	<i>habe-b-o</i>	‘I will have’
	<i>habe-b-is</i>	‘you (sg.) will have’
	<i>habe-b-it</i>	‘he/she/it will have’
	<i>babe-b-imus</i>	‘we will have’
	<i>habe-b-itis</i>	‘you (pl.) will have’
	<i>habe-b-unt</i>	‘they will have’

The third and fourth conjugations had slightly different inflections for the future. They were: *-am*, *-es*, *-et*, *-emus*, *-etis*, *-ent*. Unlike the first two conjugations, there was no *-b-* suffix inserted between the verb stem and the future inflection. The ending in *-b-* + suffix (referred to as the **-bo** future from here onwards) is said to have developed from Proto-Indo-European **bhu* ‘to live’, which is itself the proto-form for English ‘be’ (Lehmann 1982:27).

3.2 Periphrastic future

Two periphrastic forms which were used to express the future in Latin involved either the future active participle *-urus*, or the future passive participle *-ndus*, combined with forms of *esse* ‘to be’. The former is the first attested periphrastic construction in Classical Latin and is demonstrated in the following examples (taken from Fleischman 1982:37 and Pinkster 1990:225 respectively):

(2)	<i>dico</i>	<i>quid</i>	<i>hoc</i>	<i>facturus</i>	<i>sim</i>
	say.1SG.PRES.IND	this	this	FUT.ACT.PART	ESSE
	I say that <i>I will do it</i>				
(4)	<i>ille</i>	<i>abducturus</i>	<i>est</i>	<i>mulierem</i>	<i>cras</i>
	he	FUT.ACT.PART	ESSE	girl.GEN	tomorrow
	<i>he will take away</i> my girl tomorrow				

Various meanings have been attributed to the *-urus esse* future, such as imminence, intentionality, destiny, resolve, futurity and purpose. In all these senses it functioned as an aspect marker (Fleischman 1982:35). By the post-Classical period the *-urus* phrase was no longer expressing only prospective aspect, but also future/posterior tense.⁵ In this latter role it competed with the synthetic form for the future tense, *amaturus sum = amabo*, but only in non-past contexts (the *-urus* form was the only exponent of posteriority in past contexts).

The second periphrastic construction, a combination of the future

passive participle ending in *ndus* with forms of *esse* to be’, could initially be ascribed any one of a range of meanings normally associated with future, having anything from temporal to aspectual to modal nuances. However by Late Latin it came to be used unambiguously to denote future tense, i.e. prediction, as in the example below (from Fleischman 1982:39):

⁵ Aspect markers quite commonly evolve into tense markers (Bybee et al. 1994; Givón 1973:91-7; Ultan 1978:114). Prospective aspect is the temporal dimension of present relevance i.e. present relevance can be inferred from prospective aspect (for more on this, see Fleischman 1983:191f). It is also a relationship of posteriority, where the event time (E) is subsequent to reference time (R).

- (5) *spero utique et aliud esse inveniendum*
and I certainly hope that something else *will be discovered*

The next section is a discussion of the construction involving the infinitive verb + *habere* ‘to have’, which grammaticized to become the synthetic future form in the Contemporary Romance languages.

4. The *habere* construction

This section will firstly outline the various contexts in which *habere* ‘to have’ appeared in Latin, and will be followed by examples from Common Romance involving the reflexes of *ha here*, by which stage these constructions had already undergone some semantic, syntactic and phonological transformations.

Valesio 1968 (p.114) gives examples from Classical Latin showing the various uses and meanings of *habere* to have, originally a fully lexical verb:

- (6) *habeo domum*
have.1SG.PRES.IND house.Acc
‘I have a house’
- (7) *ita scriptum habeo*
thus writing.ACC have.1SG.PRES.IND
‘I have it so; it is written so’ (i.e. ‘I have something written in this way’)
- (8) *cantare habeo*
sing.INF have.1SG.PRES.IND
‘I have to sing’

We can see here the semantic range of *habere*, as a simple verb of possession in (6), to one where it also had obligative nuances when accompanied by the infinitive form of the verb, as in (8). This is not uncommon for verbs of possession, as will be discussed in detail in the next section. *Habere* first appeared in specific periphrastic constructions in post-Classical Latin, and especially in the writings of Christian theologians in the early third century AD. Its past form either perfect or imperfect - was used in limited environments, mainly in subordinate clauses (chiefly relative), and in co-occurrence with the passive infinitive (example from Benveniste 1968:90):

- (9) *in nationibus a quibus magis suscipi habebat*
among nations.ABL by which most accept.3SG.PASS.INF have.3SG.PAST.IMP
among the nations by which it had most to be accepted

Benveniste (1968:90) assigns the meaning of PREDESTINATION to this construction, rather than OBLIGATION, insisting that the purposive meaning commonly associated with markers of future tense is absent here (for more on the obligative sense of *habere* see Fleischman 1982; Pinkster 1987; Tagliavini 1969; Valesio 1968). Bybee *et al.*, in agreeing with Benveniste’s interpretation of this construction, also point out other constructions involving *be* or *have* auxiliaries which can pass through a stage where they signify PREDESTINATION, rather than OBLIGATION, before evolving into future markers (1994:320 *et passim*). In fact, predestination would appear to be equivalent to an extra strong sense of strong obligation, which impinges upon individuals rights to choose their own course of action, thus setting out for them an inevitable or inescapable path of action - i.e. a predestined path.⁶

⁶ For elaboration on strong vs. weak obligation, see Bybee *et al.* 1994: 315,323.

From its limited use as described above *habere* began to appear in independent clauses, starting to function as an obligative auxiliary proper. It came to be used in such examples as the following:

- (10) habeo hoc dicere
 have.1SG.PRES.IND this say.INF
 ‘I have to say this’

(The evolution of this form will be discussed in the next section.) As it started to generalize it began to appear with the infinitives of intransitive verbs, and eventually with the infinitives of all verbs.

Moving on from Latin, we see that by Late Common Romance (fourth and fifth centuries) the following morphosyntactic patterns (reconstructions) involving *habere* could be found⁷ (primary and secondary stress are indicated):

- (11) i */áweo dómu(m)/ ‘I have a house’
 ii */àweo kantátu(m)I ‘I have sung’
 iii */àweo kantáre/ ‘I have to sing’
 iv */kantar-ájo/ ‘I will sing’

In (11-i) *áweo* (the reflex of *habere*) is seen operating as a lexical verb, signifying possession or ownership. In (11-ii), *áweo* functions as an auxiliary verb, in a periphrastic construction involving the past participle of the second verb. In (11-iii), *àweo* is part of a verbal phrase, having the primary meaning of obligation and implied futurity. In the last example, (11-iv), we see the phonologically reduced and fused form of *habeo* ‘I have’ appearing as the suffix *-ajo*. Here, at its most grammaticized, it has lost its lexical meaning and conveys explicitly the future tense (Valesio 1968:115, 139). These examples above provide a clear example of what Hopper (1991) calls “divergence” - the co-existence of a lexical item with its grammaticized forms.

The next section will deal with possible reasons for the popularity of the *habere* construction as a future in Common Romance, in preference to the synthetic Latin future.

5. Some reasons for the future changeover

Although there has been much discussion in the literature on the reason for the decline of the *-bo* future and the simultaneous emergence of a periphrastic future, it is fairly clear that there can be no one reason to account for such change. The eventual predominance (in Common Romance) of the infinitive + *habere* construction over the future in *-ho* involved the interaction of several factors, which will be discussed below. In fact, for quite a while both the synthetic future in *-bo* and the analytic *habere* phrase co-existed, each expressing the future but having stylistic and slight semantic differences in use (Hopper 1991 calls this co-existence of older forms alongside newer ones “layering”). The old synthetic future in *-bo* marked futurity, i.e. where the event time was subsequent to speech time (Carey 1955:91f), while the new analytic construction formed with the infinitive + *habere* was used to mark a relationship of posteriority, initially having strong obligative nuances, and equivalent in use to the go-future used today (Fleischman 1982:58). The demise of the *-bo* future and the increased use of infinitive + *habere* must be seen as the result of several compounding factors, given below, resulting in the grammaticization of the periphrasis:

⁷ Note that the phoneme /w/ would have been realized as the allophone [β] in intervocalic position; in Italian the realization is [v], as in *avere* ‘to have’.

(i) Phonological factors - two are provided here. (a) The neutralization of contrasting phonemes /b,v/ and /e,i/ resulted in the following homophonous forms: *amabit* 'he will love' and *amavit* 'he loved'. The suggestion here is that the decline of the future in *-bo* was a matter of necessity, in order to avoid potentially ambiguous sentences (Benveniste 1968:91; Fleischman 1982:41; Pinkster 1987:210; Vincent 1988:48). Since context is normally sufficient to disambiguate, this reason seems implausible when considered in isolation. (b) Vincent (1988) states the inconsistency of inflections across the conjugations as a reason for the unpopularity of the Latin synthetic future. In fact, by Classical Latin there already existed several hybrid forms, such as *scibo* for *sciam*, suggesting that there may have been some confusion among speakers with regards to the inflectional future paradigms.

(ii) Shift in Latin word order from SOV to SVO. A series of analytic formations appeared in later spoken Latin, combining a modal auxiliary with an infinitive verb (see below for contemporary cognates and uses of these modal phrases). The emergence of analytic verb constructions with auxiliaries correlates highly with a shift in word order from soy to svo (Hopper & Traugott 1993:52), and this type of word-order shift is usually associated with a loss of case morphology. While this is offered as an explanation for the proliferation of analytic constructions (Fleischman 1982:50; Vincent 1988:63), it is inadequate as a total explanation. A typological account such as this can hardly furnish a full explanation, and on its own could never be the cause of such wide-ranging change.⁸

(iii) Reanalysis. The development of *habere* into an obligative auxiliary has been attributed to either a process of reanalysis (Fleischman 1982) or analogy (Pinkster 1987 - see next point below). As Fleischman explains (1982:121), initially the infinitive verb was used as a type of relative clause in relation to *habere* e.g. *hoc habeo dicere* 'I have this **to say**' (i.e. which I will say). A syntactic reanalysis resulted in the object pronoun (*hoc*) becoming dependent on the infinitive, and the infinitive becoming dependent on *habere*: *habeo hoc # dicere* 'I have this # to say' → *habeo # hoc dicere* 'I have to say # this' (see Hopper & Traugott 1993 for a fuller explanation of the process of reanalysis).

(iv) Analogy. Pinkster's explanation is that *habere*'s use with an infinitive verb was patterned on an analytic construction involving *dare* 'to give'. *Dare*, like *habere*, was able to be used in a construction followed by the object of the verb + the predicate in gerund form (1987:2080). For example:

(12) *dare* *aquam* *bibendam*
 INF OBJ PRED.GERUND
 'to give water to drink'

(13) *aedem* *habuit* *tuendam*
 OBJ HABERE3SG.PAST PRED.GERUND
 'he had a house to look after'

This last example has a strong sense of obligation or necessity. The expression in (12) could also appear as follows, in construction with the verb in the infinitive form:

(14) *dare* *aquam* *bibere*
 INF OBJ INF

⁸ Languages with relatively free word order, such as Latin, often lose their case morphology while simultaneously acquiring a more rigid word order. To speak of cause and effect would be irrelevant since the two processes feed each other. Grammatical information previously encoded in case markings comes to be furnished by periphrases. For more on this, see Burridge 1993:225.

Pinksters claim is that *habere* came to appear with the infinitive form of the verb on analogy (my term, not his) with *dare* ‘to give’. Certainly this is a valid point, given the importance of analogy as a motivating force in the process of grammaticization (see Hopper & Traugott 1993 for more on this). However, it must be reiterated: on its own, analogy could not account for the success of the periphrastic future. It must be seen in perspective as one of the many interacting factors outlined above, which together resulted in change.

Another hypothesis which appeals to the mechanism of analogy is advanced by Fleischman (1982: Section 3.3.511). She explains that, in developments similar to the formation of the future with the infinitive + *habere*, other tenses in Latin came to be expressed with *habere* and forms of the main verb. The present perfective, originally the synthetic form *cantavit* ‘he has sung’, had the same form as the past simple ‘he sang’. In order to distinguish the two the former came to be conveyed with the periphrasis *habet cantatum*, combining the present indicative form of *habere* with the perfect participle of the main verb *cantare*. And the conditional, or future-in-the-past, was newly formed with the infinitive of the verb + *habere* in the past imperfective. In fact, Fleischman believes that enough evidence exists to suggest that the future-in-the-present use of infinitive + *habere* was actually modelled on the conditional. Although this contradicts the traditional accounts of the chronological formation of the conditional in Romance (which propose that the conditional periphrasis was modelled on the future construction) it is nonetheless an attractive hypothesis as seen from the perspective of analogy.

(v) Renewal/replacement. Various linguists have observed that it is not uncommon for periphrastic constructions to replace morphological ones (Heine *et al.* 1991; Hopper & Traugott 1993). It has also been noted that this can happen where two forms - a periphrastic one and a synthetic one - are in competition even though there may be slight semantic differences (Hopper & Traugott 1993:10; Langacker 1977:101ff). The tendency appears to be for the periphrastic construction to eventually predominate, gaining in frequency of use. It may eventually undergo changes which result in its separate elements coalescing, and in its becoming one element. Hopper & Traugott (1993:10) cite the case of the Romance futures, in their development from Latin, as an example of “renewal” and “replacement”. I have taken the liberty of adapting and extending their diagram for my own purposes (see Table 1). As can be seen from this table, older synthetic future grams co-exist for some time with newer analytic phrases before being replaced by them, as the latter gradually come to assume the temporal meanings initially afforded by the inflected forms. In turn, the analytic phrases eventually synthesise as they come to be used with more frequency and with less co-occurrence restrictions. And so the grammaticization process continues. As can also be inferred from the table below, one may guess at the potential synthesized form of an analytic phrase. It is with less certainty, however, that one may accurately predict which periphrastic expression in a language will begin to seriously compete with a synthetic form (see section below for more discussion on potential future grams).

Hopper & Traugott (1993:10) are at pains to point out the inadequacy of such terms as “replacement” and “renewal” since one may wrongly infer by them that there are communicative needs to be filled (and this is obviously not so in the case of future grams) and also that the new analytic phrases function identically to the synthetic elements which they replace. Again, this is clearly not the case. As various linguists have argued, *cantabo* and *cantare habeo* were not in competition at the semantic level (Benveniste 1968; Fleischman 1982; Carey 1955). Nevertheless, as descriptive terms, “renewal” and “replacement” are useful in labelling what are clearly recurring stages in the process of grammaticization.

TABLE 1: A representation of the processes of “renewal” and “replacement” over time

PERIOD	SYNTHETIC FUTURE	ANALYTIC FUTURE
Pre-Latin	*?	*kanta b ^h umos lit. ‘to sing# we are’
Latin	cantabimus ‘we will sing’ (Future in <i>-bo</i>)	cantare habemus ‘we have to# (<i>habere</i> construction) sing’
Contemporary Romance		
• Italian	canteremo ‘we will sing’ (<i>habere</i> future)	stiamo per cantare ‘we are about (be-future) to# sing’
• French	chantereons ‘we will sing’ (<i>habere</i> future)	nous allons chanter ‘we are going (go-future) to# sing
• Spanish	canteremos ‘we will sing’ (<i>habere</i> future)	vamos a cantar ‘we are going (go-future) to# sing
Post-Contemporary Romance	?	?
	Time will tell; otherwise, for a sneak preview, refer Section (6)	

(vi) Pragmatic inferencing. One of the motivations behind language change pertains to the speaker’s desire for “signal simplicity” (Langacker 1977 101ff). The speaker wants to impart the necessary information by using the least possible amount of words, relying on shared pragmatic knowledge between speaker and listener for effective communication. This is usually done through the “routinization” of phrases, i.e. by using existing words or phrases to express old notions in a new way (Hopper & Traugott 1993:640. In order to shed some light on *habere* in this regard, let us consider the case of *have* in English which, although not as grammaticized as *habere*, may still provide some clues to the motivations for this process. In fact, *have* has already undergone some of the changes which *habere* went through: from being a lexical verb signifying possession it has come to be used with a wide range of infinitive verbs where the sense of obligation dominates, e.g. *I have a letter to mail* (Possession); *I have a letter to write* (Obligation). As it continues to grammaticize, listeners may be able to infer intention from the use of *have* in this type of construction (see also the path of change given in Section 2.2):

(15) *I hafta (have to) get my car fixed.*

(16) *? I hafta get my car fixed, but I’m not gonna cause it’s too expensive.*

At this point in time we see a simplification of the communicative signal a reduction of the phonetic form, loss of morpheme boundaries, and an increase in pragmatics (initially). Sentence (16) appears to be unacceptable (at least to some speakers) not only because of the strong obligation sense inherent in the construction *have to*, but also because the listener can predict that the event will happen, since the sense of intention when the agent is the first person is quite prevalent. In time, the listener may also be able to infer intention when the agent in this construction is the third person (far more on this see Bybee *et al.* 1994). In the same way, infinitive + *habere* was probably predestined to become a future marker, since from a meaning of strong obligation (or predestination, see Benveniste 1968) the listener was in time able to infer intention on the part of the agent, and then prediction that the action would in fact take place

It is clear from the material presented above that there is no one satisfactory reason behind the evolution of the Romance synthetic future. Rather, its emergence is clearly the consequence

of a number of complex factors, involving semantic, syntactic, morphological, phonological, typological and pragmatic issues, and possibly also cultural factors such as the influence of the literature of Christian scholars (examples from whom contain many instances where the present form of *habere* is used in preference to other auxiliaries - Fleischman 1982:49). From here we will move on to the future in Contemporary Italian, with particular reference to analytic futures, and also modal uses for future grams.

6. The future in Contemporary Italian: presently and futrely

In the following section I will discuss the various futures in Italian,⁹ both the synthetic future which is highly grammaticized, as well as other analytic or periphrastic expressions which are typically more recent in their use. As outlined in Section 5, the Romance synthetic future developed from the Latin infinitive + *habere* construction, and is attested in all of the major Romance languages today except Romanian. On the other hand, analytic future constructions exist in all the languages described.

The following table, depicting the synthetic future (from *habere*) and the analytic go-future in the major Romance languages, has been adapted from Fleischman (1983:187):

TABLE 2: *Habere-* and *go-futures* in the Romance languages

	Synthetic (<i>habere</i> -future)	Analytic (go-future)
Italian	farò [do.1SG.FUT]	?????
French	je ferai	je vais faire
Spanish	hare	voy a hacer
Portuguese	farei	vou fazer
Catalan	fare	?vaig a fer
Romanian	Øje vais faire	(v)oi face

6.1 The synthetic future

Much of the discussion on the synthetic future can be seen in Section 4, where its development from the analytic infinitive + *habere* construction was traced. In Contemporary Italian the verb is conjugated for the future tense as follows (the reflex of *habere* is *avere* 'to have'):

<i>ballerà</i>	'I will dance'	<	<i>ballare</i>	'to dance'	+ <i>ho</i>	'I have'
<i>ballerai</i>	'you (sg.) will dance'	<	<i>ballare - hai</i>			'you (sg.) have'
<i>ballerà</i>	'he/she will dance'	<	<i>ballare + ha</i>			'he/she has'
<i>balleremo</i>	'we will dance'	<	<i>ballare + abbiamo</i>			'we have'
<i>ballerete</i>	'you (pl.) will dance'	<	<i>ballare + avete</i>			'you (pl.) have'
<i>balleranno</i>	'they will dance'	<	<i>ballare + hanno</i>			'they have'

This future is quite old and fairly advanced in its grammaticization, so characteristically it is phonologically reduced in form, with forms of *avere* 'to have' affixed to the verb, and synchronically the lexical content of the inflection is non-existent. As is also typical of highly grammaticized grams, the synthetic future is no longer commonly used to denote the future, but is used for a variety of modal purposes (for more on the modal uses of future grams see Bybee & Pagliuca 1987; Bybee *et al.* 1994; Fleischman 1982:24). The following examples demonstrate this clearly:

⁹ The Italian data is not restricted to Standard Italian examples. I have tried to indicate where possible the dialect of Italian under discussion; where I have not done so one can assume that I am referring to Standard Italian

- (17) i SUPPOSITIONS
saranno state *le* *nove*
 be.3PL.FUT be.FEM..PL.PAST.PART the.FEM.PL nine
 'it was probably/it would have been nine o'clock'
- ii DOUBT, HESITATION OR UNCERTAINTY
sara *vero*, *ma non ci* *credo*
 he,3SG.FUT true but NEG PROFORM believe.1SG.PRES.IND
 'it may be true, but I don't believe it'
- iii PROBABILITY
avrà *venti anni*
 have.3SG.FUT twenty years
 'she's probably about twenty years old'
- iv POSSIBILITY
aurò *torto*
 have1SG.FUT mistaken.PAST.PART
 'I may have been/could have been wrong'
- v IMPERATIVE
imparerai *a* *memoria* *questa* *poesia*
 learn.2SG.FUT PREP memory this poem
 'you will learn this poem'

This semantic development is hardly unusual given that both the future and modalities deal with the semantics of uncertainties. Modal verbs are concerned with such notions as probability, possibility, obligation, necessity, and so on, and like predictions of the future they hover tentatively just beyond the border which separates reality from not-yet-reality.

6.2 Go-future

The go-future is not listed in grammar books as a means of expressing the future in Italian (Lazzarino 1987; Lepschy & Lepschy 1988; McCormick 1969), and does not appear to be common even in Italian speech. A study by Berretta (1991), however, cites two apparent instances of a go-future:¹⁰

- (18) va *a finire che, secondo me, hai l'appartamento poi non vai;*
 go.3SG.PRES.IND
 vai *a fare glottologia oggi?*
 go.2SG.PRES.IND
 'it will finish up, reckon, that you'll have the apartment
 then you won't go; are you gonna attend linguistics today?'

The sense intended by the speaker in the first clause is undeniably one of prediction or future, while in the second clause the sense conveyed is intention rather than prediction. And as seen in Section 2.2 and elsewhere, a gram can signal intention prior to developing the meaning of prediction/future. While two instances of a go-future, out of a total of 100 utterances, can hardly be considered common, this may be symbolic of an emerging trend. Given the use of go-futures in the other Contemporary Romance languages, it is highly plausible that Italian will also develop such a use.

¹⁰ The study by Berretta 1991 concentrated on the speech of Italian female university students

Another example of a go-future is provided by Fleischman (1982:81):

- (19) *vado* *a* *mangiare stasera in casa dei* *miei genitori*
 go.1SG.PRES.IND PREP eat.INF tonight in house the.MASC PL.GEN my parents
 ‘I’m going to have dinner tonight at my parents’ house’

There is clearly more than just a sense of spatial movement indicated in this use of *andare*. Certainly it could be the temporal adverb *stasera* ‘tonight’ which helps to lend a non-present tense reading.¹¹ However, as has been suggested by Bybee *et al.* (1994:329), movement through time follows on logically from movement through space, so the issue would seem to be when rather than if it will grammaticize as a future expression. However it may be felicitous to recall at this stage that lexical items, once on the path of grammaticization, need not fully grammaticize. This may help to partly explain the reluctance of one native speaker to glean a temporal reading from this particular example.

In other uses, the inflected form of *andare* can be accompanied by the past participle to express the modality of necessity or obligation as demonstrated in the following idiomatic phrases (Lazzarino 1987:331, 332):

- (20) i *va* *considerato*
 go.3SG.PRES.IND consider.MASC.SING.PAST.PART
 it must be considered
- ii *va notato* ‘it must be noted’
 va detto ‘it must be said’
 va ripetuto ‘it must be repeated’
 non va dimenticato ‘it must not be forgotten’

Such expressions render a type of future passive when *andare* is in the present tense. This leads one to wonder whether such a use of *andare* will eventually generalize and be used with a greater range of verbs (and with subjects other than the third person impersonal). If so, then periphrases such as those in example (20) would clearly be potential future markers. In fact, by a short stretch of the imagination one can infer intention on the part of the speaker (although the subject of *andare* ‘to go’ is 3rd person singular, the agent is clearly either the 1st person/speaker or 2nd person). Since that which must be considered/said/noted etc. directly follows the *andare* phrase in a subordinate clause, if such constructions were to be reanalysed then one could PREDICT that same would be considered/said/noted etc.

6.3 Other futures

Various future constructions have been attested in Contemporary Italian, both analytic and otherwise. Some of these (will-future, temporal adverbs) elicited dubious responses when tested on native Italian speakers. Given that change happens very gradually, and that native speakers are often least aware of change in progress, this is not a cause for concern. At best, one can only surmise that these *may* signify the future.

¹¹ The French go-future evolved in a similar fashion, at first needing a concomitant temporal adverb to lend future meaning. As the sense of future transferred itself to the verb *aller* ‘to go’ (ie, the conversational implicatures became conventionalized -see Hopper & Traugott 1993) the temporal adverb became redundant and was no longer used.

6.3.1 Aspectual futures

Aspectual futures (see Section 2.2) are highly grammaticized, and therefore exhibit the characteristics of old grams discussed in Section 2.1. In Standard Italian, which does have a synthetic future, speakers prefer to use the present tense of the verb in conjunction with a temporal phrase when indicating a future action which is considered to be “certain” (Berretta 1991:135; Lazzarino 1987:3). This is more colloquial in use than the inflected future:

- (21) *Arrivano fra un'ora*
arrive,3PL.PRES.IND within DET.hour
they're arriving in an hour
- (22) *Quando arrivano, me ne vado*
when arrive.3PL.PRES.IND 1 SG.REFL PARTITIVE go.1SG.PRES.IND
when they arrive, I'll go'

In both examples, the future sense is conveyed by temporal elements: *fra* 'within' and *quando* 'when'. Thus, a future meaning is still rendered even though the verbs are inflected for the present tense. However, even when there is no temporal expression the present tense affords a future meaning, the sense of future being recoverable from the context. For example:

- (23) *Cosa fai domani? Gioco a tennis.*
thing do.2SG.PRES.IND tomorrow play.1SG.PRES.IND PREP tennis
'What are you gonna do tomorrow? I'm gonna play tennis.'

And an example from Calabrese, a southern dialect:

- (24) *lu fazzu crai*
it do.1SG.PRES.IND tomorrow
'I will do it tomorrow'

In the majority of southern Italian dialects the verb inflected for the present tense is the most common means of conveying future tense (Lepschy & Lepschy 1988:76; Rohlfs 1968-9: §589), and in fact the synthetic future (as it developed from Latin) is largely unknown in these areas.

6.3.2 Will-future

Desiderative modals such as *will* typically evolve from verbs of desire such as *want*, and are highly likely to develop into future markers (Bybee *et al.* 1994; Lehmann 1982:31; Ultan 1978:113). In several Northern Italian dialects (from the Piedmont region) there are attested examples of *volo* to want + infinitive which yield a future reading (examples are taken from Rohlfs 1968-9: §592): *al völ mandà, al vé mandà* 'I will send it'; *a véi fá* 'I will make'; *questa conversazione vuole imbrogliarmi* this conversation will throw me into confusion'. The meaning is explicitly future, with an underlying sense of volition where the speaker is also the agent of the action. In Standard Italian such a use of *volere* to want, to render a future meaning, appears to be in a state of flux. Example (25) very clearly indicates desire, and possibly also intention, while example (26) strongly signifies intention on the part of the 1st person-agent:

- (25) *voglio imparare a nuotare*
want.1SG.PRES.IND learn.INF to swim.INF
I want to learn to swim
- (26) *voglio fare un altro anno*
want.1SG.PRES.IND do.INF one other year
I want to do another year'

In fact, the latter was given in reply to the question: ‘What are you gonna do next year?’. The English answer was; ‘continue studying at La Trobe’, and the above response was given when asked for the Italian translation. Given the English response, the speaker undoubtedly wishes to express both intention, and prediction i.e. future. Interestingly, neither the synthetic future (the older future), nor *fare* ‘to do’ inflected for the present tense (the present tense being commonly used in Italian to denote the future), were used. This could be an example of language change in progress. It has been noted that a grammaticized form gradually increases in frequency, appearing in a wider range of environments as it evolves into a grammatical item (Bybee 1990:3; Hopper & Traugott 1993:103). That *voglio* ‘to want’ + infinitive are used to signify a future event which is certain (its level of certainty being indicated by the speaker’s implied use of *gonna* in English) suggests that perhaps it will grammaticize into a marker of the future. At this stage, however, there is insufficient evidence to do other than speculate.

6.3.3 Have-future

Both infinitive + *habere*, or *habere* + infinitive, were permitted forms in Latin (Fleischman 1982:72, 113 *et passim*), both having slight differences in meaning. As the former came to assume a predominantly temporal meaning, the latter was used to express the modalities previously signified by infinitive + *habere* (Thielmann 1885, cited in Fleischman 1982:176, n.20). While infinitive + *habere* went on to evolve into the synthetic future in Romance (as seen in Section 4) the *habere* + infinitive construction remained a periphrasis, with some dialects inserting a preposition (*ad* or *d*) between the two verb forms. The survival of *habere* + infinitive is partly attributed to the shift in Latin word order: while infinitive + *habere* had begun to synthesise, *habere* + infinitive was reanalysed to fit into the new SVO word order (Fleischman 1982:121). It developed the following uses in various Italian dialects, with or without intervening preposition:

- (27) *agghia a candà*
 have.1SG PREP sing.INF
 ‘I will sing’

This is a common use in the southern Italian dialects, which for the most part did not adopt the synthetic future from the infinitive + *habere* construction. Other examples (taken from Rohlfs 1968-9: §590,591) are:

- (28) *av' a vaní*
 have.3SG.PRES.IND PREP come.INF
 ‘he will come’
- (29) *amm a ffari*
 have.1PL.PRES.IND PREP do.INF
 ‘we will do’
- (30) *anna da purtà*
 have.3PL.PRES.IND PREP bring.INF
 ‘they will bring’
- (31) *ho a prire*
 have.1SG.PRES.IND open.INF
 ‘I have to open’

The readings above are clearly future tense, however there persists a nuance of obligation or necessity (Fleischman 1982:74; Rohlfs 1968-9: §591). As Hopper (1991) has noted, this “persistence” of an earlier lexical meaning is not unusual for grammaticizing items.

Although Standard Italian does not, according to grammarians, engage the cognate expression *avere* ‘to have’ + (preposition) + infinitive for signifying the future tense, it appears to have potential future gram status. *Avere cia fare* is used to indicate something which must be done, for example:

- (32) *non posso restare; ho da fare.*
 NEG can.1SG.PRES.IND remain.INF have.1SG.PRES.IND *da* do.INF
 ‘I can’t stay; I’m busy’ (lit. ‘I can’t stay; I have (NP) to be done’)

In this use, *avere da fare* has grammaticized as a semantic unit with fixed meaning (i.e. it is an idiomatic phrase whose individual components are not interpreted literally) However, when a NP is inserted between the inflected form of *avere* and *da fare*, the primary meaning is one of obligation (McCormick 1969:123) or necessity, and this is especially so in varieties of Italian where it co-exists with the synthetic future and is not itself a marker of future tense (eg. Standard Italian):

- (33) *ho la casa da pulire*
 have.1SG.PRES.IND the house *da* clean.INF
 ‘I have to clean the house’

Like *hafta* in English, *avere NP da fare* signifies strong obligation. One could not say:

- (34) *ho la casa da pulire, però non la pulisco*
 ‘I have to clean the house, however I’m not going to clean it’

(source: Mirna Cicioni, p.c.)

There is a strong sense of intention on the agents part, from which the listener could eventually infer prediction. As seen in the futures path in Section 2.2, this stage where the gram signifies intention is an important precursor to its use as a marker of future tense.

6.3.4 Temporal adverbs

Bybee *et al.* 1994 found in their study that future grams originating in temporal adverbs were extremely rare. The first of the following examples is from Calabrese, a southern dialect, while the second is from Piemontese, a northern dialect (Rohlf's 1968-9: §592):

- (35) *la gente po ti chiami lla scuntenti*
 the people **then** you call.3SG.PRES.IND the dissatisfied
 ‘the people will call you the dissatisfied one’

- (36) *i vèndu pöi duman*
 them sell.1SG.PRES.IND **then** tomorrow
 ‘I will sell them tomorrow’

These appear to be fairly dubious examples. The verb inflected for the present tense is a common way of expressing the future in southern dialects (of which Calabrese is one) while the use of *duman* ‘tomorrow’ in the second sentence is probably the reason for the sentence having a future flavour. Since these are the only examples I could find where this adverb (*poi* in Standard Italian) is used in a future sense, it is difficult to draw any conclusions regarding its real function in such sentences, and whether or not its use is obligatory, as would be the case with a true future marker. The original gloss by Rohlf's, in Standard Italian, does not translate /poi/ as ‘then’. From this I could only conclude that it may have lost much of its lexical meaning, and does in fact function as a future marker in such examples. Whether or not this development will continue is a matter for future investigation.

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