A Certain Future: Epistemicity, Prediction, and Assertion in Iberian Spanish Future Expression

Jessi E. Aaron
University of Florida

Abstract

The choice of future construction in Romance languages with variable expression is complex, and several factors have been shown or hypothesized to influence this choice (e.g. Aaron 2006, 2010 and Poplack & Malvar 2007). One factor stands out time and time again, though scholars do not always associate it with the same form: certainty. Using corpus-based quantitative methods, the role of certainty in Iberian Spanish future form variation is examined. The semantics of futurity and epistemic modality are discussed, with particular reference to the Spanish synthetic, or morphological, future. Then, the onset of non-future-reference use of the Synthetic Future as an epistemic marker is described, and viewed in light of the role of epistemicity in the possible strengthening of the semantics of "certainty" with the Spanish Periphrastic Future. Finally, diachronic evidence from distributional patterns in grammatical person, verb class and clause type is presented, which suggests that speakers associate the periphrastic construction with "certainty" and, increasingly, the synthetic construction with "uncertainty." It is suggested that functional competition with innovative forms can breathe new life into older forms, sparking further grammaticalization.

1. Introduction

1.1 Variation in form in Spanish future expression

In Modern Spanish, speakers use several forms to express futurity, and this variable has been the focus of several studies (e.g. Aaron 2010, Blas Arroyo 2008 and Sedano 1994). Of these forms, there are two morphosyntactic constructions: the Synthetic Future (SF) (also referred to as the Morphological Future, or just "the Future"), as in (1), and the Periphrastic Future (PF), in (2). Other forms include the Futurate Present and various modal constructions.

(1) Pronto   lo   *sabremos*.
    soon   ACC we.know-SF
    'Soon we will know (SF)' (Matar, 20w)

(2) lo   **van**   **a**   **tener**   pronto
    ACC they.go   PREP   have   soon
    'They are going to have (PF) it soon' (COREC, CECON006B, 20s)

Similar constructions also exist in French and Portuguese. Using a corpus of Iberian Spanish, this paper will examine the diachronic and synchronic evidence – as measured through several linguistic factors – that one of the main driving forces behind the variation between these forms is a semantic difference regarding level of certainty.

When two or more future forms exist at the same time in the same language variety, like with any forms with overlapping functional domains, there are various possibilities for the division of labor. On one extreme, the forms could always occur in complementary distribution, reflecting inherent semantic differences. On the other extreme, they could conceivably be in free variation, as suggested by some grammarians regarding Spanish (Butt & Benjamin 1994, p.219 and Gerboin & Leroy 1991, p.285). However, the notion of "free variation," in which two forms are completely interchangeable and usage is unstructured, is highly problematic, as variationist studies have repeatedly shown that linguistic heterogeneity tends to be structured (Weinreich, Labov & Herzog 1968, pp.99-100). Most modern-day scholars agree that the patterns found in speakers' choices regarding PF and SF indicate that Romance futures lie somewhere between these two extremes, such that speakers may have more of a choice in some contexts than in others (Aaron 2010, Blas-Arroyo 2008, Poplack & Malvar 2007 and Sedano 1994).

1.2 Polysemy and semantic distinctions

Both Spanish forms, but particularly the SF, are polysemous, and in certain contexts their meanings supersede futurity *per se*. This imperfect overlapping of contexts of use points toward a probable semantic distinction. Nonetheless, pinpointing semantic (or other) differences between PF and SF has been no simple task; in fact, it constitutes the single most recurrent question in studies on Romance futures (for a comprehensive review of this debate for French, see Poplack & Dion 2009).

Many scholars have considered the notions of time depth, a link to the present or moment of speech, or speaker attitude toward (the eventuality of) the event as the most relevant motivations behind the choice of one of these constructions over the other (e.g. Cartagena 1995-1996, Confais 1995, Jensen 2002, Melis 2006, Sedano 1994 and Vet 1993, 1994). Time depth, if taken in concrete chronological terms, is a testable hypothesis, and some authors working quantitatively with future form

variation have had success in measuring temporal distance or temporal specificity, as recoverable from the surrounding context (e.g. Aaron 2006, Orozco 2005, Poplack & Malvar 2007, Poplack & Turpin 1999 and Torres Cacoullos & Walker 2009).

It has been suggested, however, that chronological time is not the best explanation for future form variability. Instead, more abstract, psychological motives have been cited, such as the speaker's *perception* of the nearness of the event or the speaker's attitude about the event. The SF has traditionally been seen as more "neutral and psychologically detached" than the PF (see Aaron 2006 and Poplack & Turpin 1999, p.137 for a summary of studies). In Romance languages, the most common meaning ascribed to the PF is certainty (Almeida & Díaz 1998, Confais 1995, Jensen 2002 and Vet 1994). Other proposed psychological meanings include intention (Confais 1995 and Sedano 1994) or volition and determination (Bishop 1973, p.89), objectivity (Berschin 1986, p.303 and Jensen 2002), and speaker involvement in the event (Fleischman 1982 and Leeman-Bouix 1994). Because such psychological motives are, according to many scholars, the prime motivator of variant choice, some have attempted, through various methods, to quantify such nuances, such as intention (Aaron 2006, Sedano 1994 and Villa-Crésap 1997). These authors are nevertheless aware that psychological motives for variation are often difficult to test, since scholars have no direct access to the speakers' internal motivations (Bauhr 1989, pp.91-92 and Poplack & Turpin 1999), creating an empirical impasse.

One way around this impasse could be to construct examples, to have access to one's own psychological motives. Judgments based on such examples – created through reflection and planning, and based on the intuitions of researchers – however, are not accurate. In fact, in Canadian French future expression, Poplack and Turpin (1999, pp.140-142) found that one "impossible" context for PF occurred relatively frequently in their corpus. In their examination of the use of the verb *se marier* 'get married' in Ottawa-Hull spoken French, they found that 55% of the uses of *se marier* in contexts in which the speaker was uncertain of the realization of the event occurred with PF. Other scholars (e.g. Confais 1995, Fleischman 1982 and Imbs 1968) have deemed this context of uncertainty unsuitable for PF use, and used this as evidence for the "undeniable" difference in meaning between *Paul va se marier* 'Paul is going to get married (PF)' and *Paul se mariera* 'Paul will marry (SF)' (Poplack & Turpin 1999, p.140). As Poplack and Malvar (2007) note,

> ...very few of the motivations ascribed to variant choice in the (prescriptive or descriptive) literature are now, or ever have been, relevant to actual usage. Grammarians have been silent on the role of the operative contextual factors, focusing instead on semantic, psychological and other motivations which have no basis in empirical fact. (p.162)

Like in Canadian French, the Spanish PF does occur regularly in contexts that could be understood as uncertain. Given this variation, are the many studies on Spanish future variation that have referred to certainty (e.g. Almeida & Díaz 1998, Confais 1995, Jensen 2002 and Vet 1994) completely off base? This paper, with an interest in the vague psychological notion of certainty, is a search for empirical fact.

This paper is an attempt to operationalize the notion of certainty as a factor in Iberian Spanish future form variability through corpus-based quantitative methods. Section 2 will include a discussion of the semantics of futurity and epistemic modality, with particular reference to the SF and its relationship to certainty. After a description of the data and methods in Section 3, I will examine the onset of the use of SF as an epistemic marker in Section 4.1. In Section 4.2, I will attend to the distributional patterns of grammatical person with SF and PF, with particular attention to the potential disassociation of "certainty" with the SF. Section 4.3 examines the use of the SF in concessive contexts. Finally, in Section 4.4, diachronic evidence regarding the verbs that co-occur with these constructions as object complements suggests that speakers associate the PF with "certainty" and, increasingly, the SF with "uncertainty." Section 5 will include a brief summary of the findings and a discussion of their implications.

2.   Epistemic modality and Synthetic Future semantics

In the case of Spanish, the form generally known as "the Future," the SF, has undergone divergence; that is, it has become more than a future. It is also used in contexts in which it does not describe a future action (e.g. Azevedo 1992, p.116), most frequently as an epistemic marker (e.g. Azevedo 1992, p.116, Baena Z. 1996, Bello 1847 [1984], Butt & Benjamin 1994, p.216, Gili y Gaya 1958, Kitova 1986, Stage 2002 and Vega Llamas 2002). Scholars in Romance linguistics have various terms for this use. For example, Tomaszkiewicz (1988) and Sedano (1994) call it simply the "modal" use, while Cartagena (1995-1996) calls it "probabilistic," Pedretti (1999) "hypothetical," and Butt and Benjamin (1994) "suppositional." For clarity here, I will refer to this as "epistemic" SF throughout. Following Poplack & Turpin (1999) and Poplack & Malvar (2007), "epistemic" uses are defined negatively, as those that do *not* refer to the future.

In terms of the research question, the epistemic uses of SF are of particular interest here because they are inherently uncertain or indeterminate. This uncertainty may also play a role in the interpretation of SF in temporal contexts. As the SF continued along its path of grammaticalization toward epistemic marker, we may hypothesize that this led to a gradual loss of any certainty meaning associated with this construction (Vet 1994), as this construction became increasingly infused with uncertainty. Though by no means does certainty alone explain all patterns of variation between PF and SF in modern Iberian Spanish, the linguistic evidence for

such an association may help elucidate any truth behind certainty-based semantic arguments.

The epistemic context, in which the SF expresses the speaker's degree of commitment to the truth of the proposition (Jespersen 1924 [1992], p.313 and Lyons 1968, p.308), or where the factual status of the proposition is marked as indeterminate (Narrog 2005, p.679), does not necessarily refer to the future at all, as shown in (3) and (4). The speaker in (3) is referring to the moment of speech, as indicated by the occurrence of *ahora* 'now' and the third-person plural Present of 'be,' *están*, in the question. The epistemicity is further emphasized by the preceding *no lo sé si* 'I don't know if.' In (4), the verb *hacer* 'make,' which could appear in the Present Indicative *hace* 'it makes' if the speaker were fully committed to the proposition (i.e. 'it was a couple of years ago'), appears in the SF-marked *hará*, though the time of reference is clearly present/past. The indeterminacy is further indicated by the co-occurrence of *o así* 'or something like that.'

(3) - ¿Y   Paquito   y   María   dónde   **están**   **ahora**?
    and   Paquito   and Maria where   they.are   now

    - **No**   **lo**   **sé**   **si**   *estarán*   con   sus   abuelos
    NEG ACC I.know if   they.are-SF with POS grandparents

    o   *estarán*   en   Valencia   dónde   *andarán*.
    or   they.are-SF PREP Valencia   where   they.walk-SF
    '- And Paquito and María, where **are** they **now**?'
    - 'I don't know if they <u>might be</u> (SF) with their grandparents or they <u>might be</u> (SF) in Valencia where they <u>might be</u> (SF).' (COREC, CCCON019A, 20s)

(4) Sí, hombre; ya   han   puesto -   ya   han   puesto
    yes man   already they.have   put-PART   already they.have put-
    PART

    algún   especial   más   de   él. *Hará*   un   par
    some   special   more   PREP he it.makes-SF DET   pair

    de   años   o   así.
    PREP years or like.that
    'Yeah, man; they've already put – they've already put on some other special of his. It <u>must be</u> (SF) a couple of years ago or something like that [since they put that program on].' (COREC, CACON006D, 20s)

While this topic has been the focus of much linguistic inquiry, only a handful of studies have presented quantitative information regarding epistemic uses of

Romance futures: Durán Urrea and Gradoville (2006) report a rate of 79% (N=60/76) of epistemic meaning in SF in spoken New Mexican Spanish, and Villa-Crésap (1997, p.58) found a rate of 70% from New Mexican spoken Spanish; similarly, Sedano (1994, p.231) found that epistemic uses of SF made up 58% (N=148/249) of all SF uses in her spoken data from Venezuela; in contrast, Cartagena (1995-1996) found that they made up an average of 11% (N=120/1133) in cross-dialectal study of literary texts written between 1964 and 1982 (see also Bybee & Fleischman 1995 and works therein on modality). Both Poplack & Tagliamonte (2001) and Poplack & Malvar (2007) excluded non-future epistemic uses from their analyses, and thus offered no token counts of epistemic uses.

The path of development in Spanish of epistemic uses from temporal SF has been explained in more than one way. In the 19th century, Bello (1847 [1984], p.216) notes this use in his grammar of the Spanish language, and describes the relationship between futurity and probability as a metaphorical one. In contrast, Bybee and Pagliuca (1987) view the epistemic use of futures as a weakened, semantically bleached manifestation of earlier uses. In a characterization of cross-linguistic tendencies in the grammaticalization of futures, Bybee, Pagliuca & Perkins (1991, pp.27-29) place future forms with epistemic meanings in the last phase of semantic development in a four-step universal diachronic path (possession > obligation (predestination) > intention > future > epistemic and imperative).

This construction's diachronic trajectory poses some challenges for researchers wishing to distinguish temporal and epistemic uses. Sometimes it is simple. For example, in (5), the SF refers to an intention regarding a future event, with no overtones of epistemic modality; the co-occurring temporal adverbial *mañana* 'tomorrow' supports this. However, the temporal SF may also have epistemic nuances, as in (6), indicated by the co-occurring *a lo mejor* 'maybe.'

(5) Entonces   te   *llamaremos* mañana   a   ver si   puedes
    then   ACC-2SG   we.call-SF   tomorrow   PREP   see if   you.can

    hacerlo o   no.
    do.it   or   NEG
    'So we'll call (SF) you tomorrow to see if you can do it or not.' (COREC, CPCON006A, 20s)

(6) -Lo   que   pasa   es que   yo   no   sé   si
    DET   COMP   it.happens   it.is COMP I   NEG   I.know   if

    sigue   habiendo   actuaciones   martes, miércoles   y   jueves.
    it.follows   having   actings   Tuesday Wednesday   and   Thursday

-Seguramente.	Lo	que	pasa	que	hoy	*estará*
surely	DET	COMP	it.happens	COMP	today	it.is-SF

muy	lleno	**a**	**lo_mejor**.
very	full	PREP	DET_better

-'The thing is that I don't know if there are still shows Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.'

-'Surely. The thing is today <u>it'll be</u> (SF) really full maybe.' (COREC, CACON006D, 20s)

In the same light, Matte Bon (2005) provides the example in (7), in which *vendrá* 'will come (SF)' can be interpreted as both temporal and epistemic.

(7) -¿Y Pepe?	¿Cómo	es	que	no	ha	llegado	todavía?
and Pepe	how	it.is	COMP	NEG	he.has	arrived-PART	still

- Se	habrá	quedado	durmiendo	y	*vendrá*	más
SELF	he.has-SF	stayed-PART	sleeping	and	he.comes-SF	more

tarde.	Siempre	hace	lo	mismo.
late	always	he.does	DET	same

'- And Pepe? How is it that he hasn't arrived yet?

- He must have overslept and <u>he'll (probably) come</u> (SF) later. He always does the same thing.'

The possibility of overlapping meanings or interpretations with modality, a phenomenon referred to as "merger," is common cross-linguistically and historically (Narrog 2005, p.684). The consequences of this are important: it is when more than one reading is possible that the potential for semantic change is ripest (Company Company 2003, p.42).

3. Data and methods

The corpus used in this study was composed of 17 documents representing the mid-13th through the early 21st centuries, and included 16 texts from written genres spanning all time periods, and one collection of transcriptions of 20th-century conversational data to supplement and compare with 20th-century and earlier writing. The documents chosen for this study, all produced in Spain, were selected in diachronic increments of approximately 150-200 years. Most of these particular texts were also chosen primarily because they are conservative critical editions and thus most faithful to the original texts. The spoken corpus used is the conversational section from a much longer transcription of 20th-century spoken Peninsular Spanish,

Corpus de Referencia de la Lengua Española Contemporánea: Corpus Oral Peninsular (COREC), which is available in electronic format. The approximate total word count for this corpus is 935,500 words, with the following breakdown: Old Spanish (13th-15th centuries), 311,000; 17th century, 232,000; 19th century, 71,500; 20th-century written, 79,000; 20th-century spoken, 242,000. Please see the Appendix for a complete list of the texts included in this corpus.

The data used for this study include all non-past-tense tokens of the PF and SF found in the corpora studied. All examples were extracted manually using a careful reading of early texts and computerized searches in texts that were electronically available and that had standard orthography. This original extraction resulted in 5,571 tokens. The count for each form by data set can be seen in Table 1.

Century (word count)	PF N	Normalized per 10,000	SF N	Norm	Total	PF: SF Ratio (%PF)
Old Spanish (~311,000)	17	0.5	1855	59.6	1872	1:109 (<1%)
17-18th c. (~232,000)	59	2.5	1308	56.3	1367	1:22 (4%)
19th c. (~71,500)	77	10.8	511	71.4	588	1:7 (13%)
20th c., written (~79,000)	83	10.5	248	31.4	331	1:3 (25%)
20th c., spoken (~242,000)	830	34.3	583	24.1	1413	1:0.7 (59%)
Total N =		1066	4505		5571	

Table 1.   Absolute and relative frequencies of PF and SF by century, raw and normalized per 10,000 words

While the data used for this study included all occurrences of both the SF and the PF, regardless of meaning nuance, because my interest was in the constraints on productive use of PF and SF and how these constraints were related to potential semantic differences or changes, certain uses that were originally extracted from the corpora were identified as irrelevant for this purpose and thus set aside. These uses included the past construction of the SF in *haber* + PP, truncated utterances, and fixed expressions (cf. Poplack & Turpin 1999, p.144). The excluded fixed expressions were, for the 19th century, *yo apostaré*, which occurred only in first-person singular, and for the 20th century, the expression *si lo sabré yo* 'don't I know it,' and syntactically unintegrated uses of *vamos a ver* 'let's see' (cf. Montes 1962-1963, pp.208-209 and Vega Llamas 2002, p.13) and *verá(s)* 'you'll see' (cf. Villa-Crésap 1997, p.52). Also excluded were the two tokens of PF in temporal *cuando* 'when' clauses, which do not permit variation with SF and which are distributionally unique in that they cannot co-occur with temporal adverbials. These were included under fixed phrases and nominalizations. After the exclusions outlined here, which resulted in the removal of 222 occurrences, I was left with a total of 5,349 tokens.

For this study, these were then coded according to the following features, which were deemed relevant to the expression of certainty: epistemicity, grammatical person and subject animacy, and clause type. Then, the main verb in sentences with SF in a subordinate clause was also coded. An example was coded as an epistemic use of SF if there was a clear indication in the surrounding text that the point of reference was the present or past, and not the future.

4. Results

4.1 The rise of epistemic SF

In line with previous research, the results of this study show that the use of the Spanish SF in non-future-reference epistemic contexts has been occurring since at least the 14th century. An early use is seen in (8), is from *El Conde Lucanor*, written in 1350, and example (9) is from the 17th-century *Príncipe Ynocente*.

(8) Tal   es   Dios   et   los   sus   fechos, que   señal
     Such   he.is   God   and DET   POSS   deeds   COMP   sign

     es   que   poco   lo   *conoscerá[n]*   los   [que]   mucho
     it.is COMP   little ACC   they.understand-SF   DET   COMP   much

     fablan   en   Él.
     they.speak   PREP   him
     'Such is God and his deeds, (that) it's a sign that those who speak of him often
     <u>must know</u> (SF) very little of him' (Lucanor, Tercera parte, p.290, 14c.)

(9) Pues   si   de   mí   estás   zeloza, ¿de   la   luna   lo
     Well   if   PREP   me   you.are jealous PREP   DET   moon   ACC

     estarás?
     you.are-SF
     'Well if you're jealous of me, <u>might you be</u> (SF) of the moon as well?'
     (Príncipe, Act I, fol. 3r, line 130, 17c.)

The existence of epistemic, non-temporal uses of SF is indisputable. That this use has been around for many centuries is also patent. What has yet to be told is how frequent this use has been diachronically, and the nature of its relationship – if any – to modern-day variability in future expression. Is it, as both the Hispanic linguistics literature on the matter and grammaticalization theory would suggest, a developing use, perhaps even the most common present-day meaning for the SF? Consider Figure 1.
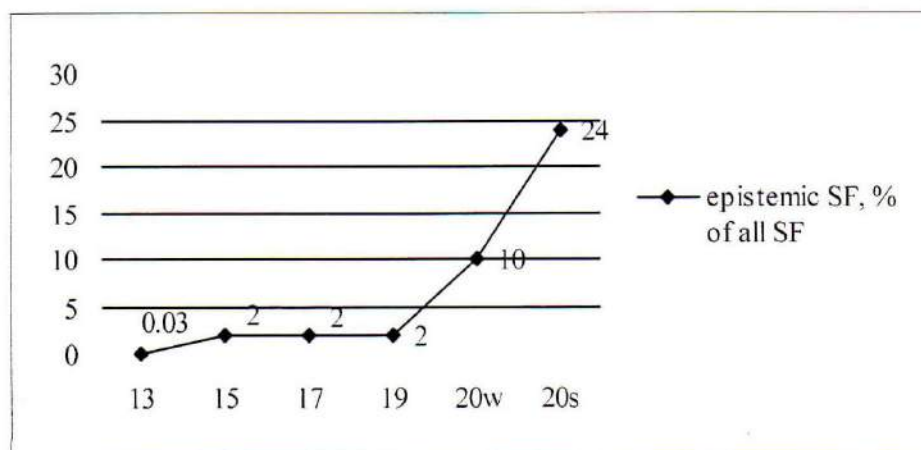
Figure 1.   Relative frequency of epistemic SF uses by data set, percentage of all SF

As Figure 1 shows, epistemic uses of SF accounted for a mere 2% of SF occurrences through the 19th century. In 20th-century written data, the proportion of epistemic uses rose to 10%, and in spoken data it comprised a 24% of all SF occurrences. Even if we assume that the epistemic SF occurred 100-150% more in spoken language (based on the 20th-century findings for Iberian Spanish, where spoken data showed a rate of 24% epistemic, compared to 10% in the written data, a difference of 140%) – and thus a spoken rate of 4-5% from the 15th through the 19th centuries – the epistemic SF has been historically unimpressive. The evidence presented here suggests that, while epistemic meanings were always latent in SF in its prime as a future, this potential lay nearly dormant until the 20th century.

4.2 Grammatical person

It is clear from examples such as (8) and (9) that some epistemic uses of SF are semantically distinct from temporal SF uses. Are these semantically distinct uses also distinctive in their distribution? While handpicked examples can provide some clues into the nature of the epistemic SF, if we wish to characterize it more accurately, it is of particular interest to quantify its distribution in the contexts in which it tends to occur. Through quantification, we can compare epistemic SF and temporal SF beyond individual occurrences, focusing instead on overall tendencies. Such a comparison can help identify differences in distribution that may offer clues into how the SF lost its temporality, as well as how this change may have occurred alongside – or as the result of – an increased association with uncertainty. Within the factors that may reveal an association with (lack of) certainty, the epistemic SF shows particularly atypical patterning in grammatical subject.

One way in which certainty may have been bleached from the SF is through its proposed move from more "intention" meaning to more "prediction" meaning (Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca 1994). Unfortunately, there are several practical difficulties in coding large quantities of data for such an abstract meaning (Bauhr 1989, pp.91-92 and Sedano 1994). Nonetheless, grammatical person may represent an overt contextual cue regarding (the likelihood of) intention meaning (Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca 1994, p.264, Melis 2006, Mellet 1989, p.277, Poplack & Malvar 2007, Poplack & Turpin 1999, Sedano 1994 and Villa-Crésap 1997, pp.64,96). Indeed, first-person contexts are more closely associated with intentionality – and thus increased certainty – than third-person contexts.

Table 2 shows the distribution of subjects of epistemic SF by grammatical person and animacy by century. Here we see a strong tendency to occur with third-person inanimate subjects in most data sets, and a clear tendency not to occur with first-person subjects (cf. Matte Bon 2005 on epistemic first-person uses of SF), categorical in the plural. After inanimate subjects, third-person singular animate subjects are relatively frequent, followed by second-person singular subjects. This clearly shows what we already would have guessed: epistemic SF has a low likelihood of expressing intention, and by extension, certainty.

Subject	OldSp % (N)	17 % (N)	19 % (N)	20w % (N)	20s % (N)	Total % (N)
1s	--	--	**9 (4)**	**4 (1)**	**2 (3)**	**3 (8)**
2s	15 (3)	18 (4)	7 (3)	50 (12)	9 (11)	14 (33)
3s, human	**30 (6)**	**18 (4)**	**26 (11)**	**21 (5)**	**23 (28)**	**24 (54)**
3s, inanim.	**35 (7)**	**59 (13)**	**40 (17)**	**21 (5)**	**46 (55)**	**42 (97)**
animals, s&p	5 (1)	--	--	--	<1 (1)	1 (2)
1p	--	--	--	--	--	--
2p	5 (1)	--	2 (1)	4 (1)	2 (4)	3 (7)
3p, human	5 (1)	--	7 (3)	--	10 (12)	7 (16)
3p, inanim.	5 (1)	4 (1)	9 (4)	--	5 (6)	5 (12)
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
Epist. SF N =	20	22	43	24	120	229

Table 2. **Distribution of subject in epistemic SF by data set**

Though the epistemic SF is most likely in contexts in which certainty is least likely, this has not always been the case with the SF as a temporal marker. In fact, diachronically, the SF has lost its association with higher-certainty contexts. In Table 3, we see that the use of first-person singular subjects with temporal SF and PF show opposite diachronic tendencies. First, with the SF, there is a decrease in first-person singular between the 17th and 20th-century written data, from 36% (453/1270) to 20% (42/212), suggesting a loss of ability to express intention – and

certainty – during this time period. As SF first-person uses decline, the PF begins to be used more with the first-person singular, from 27% (16/59) to 40% (30/75), suggesting that the PF's ability to express intention – and certainty – increased. What we see here, then, is a reversal in tendencies over time as speakers come to associate the PF with intention meaning, and this with increased certainty. Table 3 shows that though overall, totaling results from all centuries, neither form shows a general tendency to occur more in first-person singular than the other (the average proportion of first-person singular in temporal SF for the data as a whole is 30% (1241/4121), and for the PF it is 31% (306/994)), the first-person singular SF percentage is higher until the 17th century, after which the first-person singular PF percentage is higher. What we can draw from these findings is the suggestion that, alongside intentionality, certainty meanings may have shifted from SF to PF sometime around the 17th century.

	OldSp % (N)	17 % (N)	19 % (N)	20w % (N)	20s % (N)
SF 1s	30 (541)	36 (453)	29 (124)	20 (42)	21 (81)
PF 1s	23 (3)	27 (16)	40 (30)	35 (28)	30 (229)
SF Total N =	1828	1270	432	212	379
PF Total N =	13	59	75	79	768

SF: 17th vs. 19th, $p \leq .0082$, $\chi^2 = 6.979659$; 19th vs. 20w, $p \leq .0153$, $\chi^2 = 5.877678$
PF: 17th vs. 19th, $p \leq .0801$, $\chi^2 = 3.0625$, Old Spanish-17th vs. 19th-20th (all), $p \leq .0001$, $\chi^2 = 19.472$
No other significant differences between data sets.

Table 3.   **Rate of first-person singular subject in temporal SF and PF by data set**

4.3 Concessive contexts

If we return to the epistemic SF, there is one particular use that merits attention, as it highlights the indeterminacy, or lack of certainty, that can be associated with the SF. It is the "concessive" SF (Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca 1994, p.227), in which the speaker concedes that a certain fact may be true, but then offers some sort of explicit or implicit contradictory or unexpected analysis, as in (10)-(11).

(10) Esso   *será*   de   cuerpo , madre , pero   no   de
     DEM   it.is-SF   PREP   body   mother   but   NEG   PREP

     gentileza ,   no   de   estado , no   de   gracia   y
     gentility   NEG   PREP   state   NEG   PREP   grace   and

discreción,	no	de	linaje,	no	de	presumción con
discretion	NEG	PREP	lineage	NEG	PREP	presumption with

merescimiento,	no	en	virtud,	no	en	habla.
deserving		NEG	PREP	virtue	NEG	PREP	speech

'That may <u>be</u> (SF) in body, mother, but not of gentility, not of state, not of grace and discretion, not of lineage, not of deserved presumption, not virtuous, not in speech' (Celestina, Act 6, 15c.)

(11)	«Poeta	bien	_podra_	ser»,	respondio		don	Lorenço,
	poet	well	he.can-SF	be	responded-PRET		sir	Laurence

«pero	grande,	ni	por	pensamiento
but	great	NEG	PREP	thought

'"A poet he <u>may</u> (SF) well be," answered Don Lorenzo, "but great, not even in thought' (Quixote, Cap. XVIII, fol. 66r, 17c.)

This context is not very common in the data, but it does appear consistently in all time periods since the 14th-15th centuries. Table 4 shows the number of occurrences of concessive SF found in each time period, as well as the proportion of all epistemic SF uses that are concessive. As Table 4 shows, concessive epistemic uses have remained a minimal yet stable component of SF, thus remaining a long-term context of _mitigated affirmation_ that may have colored SF semantics as a whole, particularly when supported by a general increase in epistemic uses.

Century	N	% concessive
Old Spanish	1/20	5
17th	1/22	4
19th	7/43	16
20th w.	2/24	8
20th s.	3/120	2
Total	14/229	6

Table 4.   Proportion of concessive SF within epistemic SF by data set

4.4 Object complements

One of the most overt contextual cues regarding certainty is found in a small subset of the data. When SF appears in subordinate clauses, the verb of the main clause can offer explicit information regarding the attitude of the speaker regarding the

proposition. Object complement clauses often occur with heads that give the speaker's subjective perspective of the event (Thompson 2002), thus serving as a window into speakers' construal of events as, for example, more or less certain.

4.4.1   SF in subordinate clauses

As we see in Table 5, epistemic SF tends to occur in object complement clauses with main verbs that are semantically harmonic with uncertainty, such as *suponer* 'suppose,' as in (12), *imaginarse* 'imagine,' as in (13), and, most commonly, with negated *saber* 'know,' as in (14).

(12) **Supongo**   que   *tendrá*   usted   pruebas,
       I.suppose   COMP   you.have-SF   you-FORM   proofs

       testigos   de esa...   pertinaz   persecución.
       witnesses   of DEM   stubborn   persecution
       '**I suppose** that you <u>have</u> (SF) proof, witnesses of that... stubborn persecution.'
       (Matar, p.68, 20w)

(13) Satanasito   no   atinó   a   curárselos,
       Satan-DIM   NEG   find-3SG-PRET   PREP   cure-DAT-ACC

       que   no   tenía   experiencia ni   estudios de
       COMP   NEG   have-3SG-IMP   experience   NEG   studies   PREP

       ninguna clase. Era,   lo   decía   con   orgullo, un   autodidacta,
       NEG   type   He.was ACC   he.said   with   pride   DET self.taught

       que,   **me imagino,**   *será*   cosa   mala   usándola   él.
       COMP   SELF I.imagine   it.is-SF thing   bad   using-ACC   he
       'Little Satan was not able to cure them, since he had no experience or schooling
       of any kind. He was, he said it with pride, a self-taught man, which, **I imagine**,
       <u>must be</u> (SF) a bad thing, coming from him.' (Pobres diablos, p.39, 20w)

(14) Yo   no   lo   he   visto,   ¿eh?   **No**   sé   cómo   *será.*
       I   NEG   ACC   I.have seen   DM   NEG   I.know   how   it.is-SF
       'I haven't seen it, okay? **I don't know** what it <u>might be</u> (SF) like.' (COREC,
       CCCON021B, 20s)

In the 20th-century spoken corpus, the SF occurs in an object complement clause under 15 different main verbs, shown in Table 5. Of these, 33% (5/15) express uncertainty: *imaginarse* 'imagine,' *no saber* 'not know,' *parecer* 'seem,'

preguntarse 'wonder,' and *suponer* 'suppose'; 20% (3/15) express belief: *creer* 'believe,' *estar en* 'be under the impression,' and *pensar* 'think'; and 33% (5/15) express certainty: *asegurar* 'assure,' *es que* 'it's that,' *ser claro* 'be clear,' *ser seguro* 'be sure' and *tener en cuenta* 'take into account.' The verbs *decir* 'say' and *ver* 'see' make up the remaining 14% (2/15).

Head semantics	Temporal SF	Epistemic SF	Total
	% (N)	% (N)	% (N)
Uncertainty	**49 (22)**	**88 (15)**	**60 (37)**
imaginarse 'imagine'	2	3	5
no saber 'not know'	14	12	26
parecer 'seem'	1	--	1
preguntarse 'wonder'	1	--	1
suponer 'suppose'	4	1	5
Belief	**11 (5)**	**6 (1)**	**10 (6)**
creer 'believe'	3	1	4
estar en 'be under the impression'	1	--	1
pensar 'think'	1	--	1
Certainty	**29 (13)**	**6 (1)**	**22 (14)**
asegurar 'assure'	1	--	1
es que 'it's that'	7	1	8
ser claro 'be clear'	2	--	2
ser seguro 'be sure'	2	--	2
tener en cuenta 'take into account'	1	--	1
Perception/Saying	**11 (5)**	**0 (0)**	**8 (5)**
decir 'say'	3	--	3
ver 'see'	2	--	2
Total %	100	100	100
Total N =	45	17	62

The differences between epistemic and temporal SF are significant ($p < .0001$) for uncertainty, belief and certainty (zero values in perception make it untestable).

Table 5.   Head verbs of object complement clauses with SF, 20th-century speech

Here, we see the frequency of each semantic context for temporal and epistemic SF; the number in the table for each verb or expression indicates the number (N) of occurrences of that verb or expression in the respective context. As shown, 88% (15/17) of epistemic SF uses in object complement clauses occur with main verbs

that indicate uncertainty, which is significantly higher than the temporal SF rate ($p <$ .0001). The most common of these is negated *saber* 'know,' accounting for 80% (12/15) of uncertainty uses with epistemic SF. In contrast, temporal SF in object complement clauses occurs in uncertainty contexts 49% (22/45) of the time, also most often with negated *saber* 'know' (64%, 14/22). Contexts indicating certainty make up 29% (13/22) of temporal SF occurrences in this context, compared to only 6% (1/17) of epistemic SF occurrences ($p <$ .0001).

In fact, the occurrence of epistemic SF in object complement clauses with main verbs that are not semantically harmonic with uncertainty is exceedingly rare. Only one example of such a use occurred in this sample of 20th-century speech of Peninsular Spanish, with the expression *es que*, shown in (15), making up 6% (1/17) of the data. Of course, given the discourse functions of *es que*, it may not be entirely appropriate to consider (15) a subordinate clause.

(15) Pero **es   que**   de setenta   millones   de   personas -   y –
     but   it.is COMP of seventy   millions   of   persons   and

     no   *habrá*   más   de   cuarenta   o   cincuenta   mil
     NEG there.is-SF more   PREP   forty   or   fifty   thousand

     personas   haciendo   Derecho.
     persons   doing   law
     'But **the thing is,** of seventy million people – and – <u>there must not be</u> (SF) more than forty or fifty thousand doing Law.' (COREC, CCCON013G, 20s)

In the entire corpus, the only other example of epistemic SF used in a subordinate clause with a main verb indicating certainty is in the 19th-century text, *La Conjuración*, with the expression *ser cierto* 'be true,' shown in (16).

(16) Basta   pues que   el   *drama   histórico* posea   la
     it.is.enough well COMP DET drama   historical possesses-SUBJ DET

     condición esencial   de   reunir   la   utilidad y   el   deleite,   para
     condition essential PREP   unite   DET utility and DET pleasure PREP

     que   deba   hallar en   el   teatro   acogida y   aceptación;
     COMP   it.should-SUBJ find   PREP DET theater welcome and acceptance
     y   **cierto**   que   pocas composiciones *habrá*   que   puedan
     and true   COMP   few   compositions it.has-SF COMP they.can-SUBJ

ser	de	suyo	tan	instructivas,	y	ofrecer	al		ánimo	un
be	PREP	you-POSS	so	instructive	and	offer	PREP-DET		soul	DET

desahogo	tan	apacible.
recreation	so	serene

'It is sufficient then that *historical drama* possess the essential condition of uniting utility with pleasure, so that it shall find in the theater welcome and acceptance; and it is true that few compositions must exist (SF) that can be as instructive as yours, and offer the soul such a serene rest.' (Conjuración, Apuntes sobre el drama histórico, 19c.)

4.4.2 Temporal SF and PF in subordinate clauses

Table 6 shows the heads of the object complement clauses that occurred in both SF and PF in these 19th-century Peninsular data, divided by semantics into the categories of uncertainty, belief, certainty, and perception and saying. The heads expressing uncertainty that occurred in these data were: *esperar* 'hope,' negated *saber* 'know,' *parecer* 'seem,' *quién sabe* 'who knows,' and *suponer* 'suppose.' The heads that expressed belief included *apostar* 'bet,' *creer* 'believe,' *discurrir* 'deduce,' *pensar* 'think,' and *sospechar* 'suspect.' The heads that indicated certainty included *asegurar* 'assure,' *estar cierto* 'be sure,' *no hay duda* 'there is no doubt,' *olvidar* 'forget,' *saber* 'know,' and *ser claro* 'be clear.' *Olvidar* 'forget' was included under "certainty" because forgetting something implies having accepted the truth value of what has been forgotten, thus making the speaker's construal of eventuality of the event a certain one. The verbs of perception and saying included *advertir* 'warn,' *anunciar* 'announce,' *decir* 'say,' *jurar* 'swear,' *mirar* 'look,' *persuadir* 'persuade,' *prometer* 'promise,' and *ver* 'see.'

As we see, in these data, the PF does not occur with any heads expressing uncertainty. Instead, it most commonly occurs with heads expressing certainty, accounting for 44% (4/9) of the data, and belief, making up 33% (3/9). The SF, on the other hand, is used in complementary fashion, most often, first, with heads that are verbs of saying or perception, at 40% (10/25), followed by heads expressing uncertainty, at 28% (7/25). These tendencies, then, suggest an association of PF with certainty and SF with uncertainty (see, e.g. Almeida & Díaz 1998, Bishop 1973, p.89, Confais 1995, Imbs 1968, Jensen 2002 and Tlaskal 1978, pp.206-207). Furthermore, the "promise" meaning cited by some scholars and grammarians for SF (Matte Bon 2005) is seen in the SF's higher rate of co-occurrence with heads that are verbs of saying, including *prometer* 'promise' and *jurar* 'swear.'

Head semantics	Temporal SF % (N)	Temporal PF % (N)	Total % (N)
Uncertainty	**28 (7)**	**0 (0)**	**21 (7)**
Esperar 'hope'	1	--	1
No saber 'not know'	2	--	2
Parecer 'seem'	1	--	1
Quién sabe 'who knows'	2	--	2
Suponer 'suppose'	1	--	1
Belief	**12 (3)**	**33 (3)**	**18 (6)**
Apostar 'bet'	--	1	1
Creer 'believe'	2	--	2
Discurrir 'deduce'	--	1	1
Pensar 'think'	--	1	1
Sospechar 'suspect'	1	--	1
Certainty	**20 (5)**	**44 (4)**	**24 (8)**
Asegurar 'assure'		1	1
Estar cierto 'be certain'	1	--	1
No hay duda 'there's no doubt'	1	--	1
Olvidar 'forget'	--	1	1
Saber 'know'	1	2	2
Ser claro 'be clear'	1	--	1
Perception/Saying	**40 (10)**	**22 (2)**	**36 (12)**
Advertir 'warn'	1	--	1
Anunciar 'announce'	--	1	1
Decir 'say'	4	--	4
Jurar 'swear'	1	--	1
Mirar 'look'	1	--	1
Persuadir 'persuade'	--	1	1
Prometer 'promise'	1	--	1
Ver 'see'	2	--	2
Total %	100	100	100
Total N =	25	9	33

The differences between temporal SF and PF are significant ($p < .0001$) for belief, certainty and perception (zero values in uncertainty make it untestable).

Table 6.   Head verbs of object complement clauses with SF and PF, 19th century

Though the sample size is relatively small for the 19th century, a disassociation of PF with uncertainty is seen clearly. The 20th-century spoken data offers a larger data set, and thus more robust results. We have already seen that temporal SF tends to occur in object complement clauses with heads that express certainty more often than epistemic SF. Table 7 shows how the PF lines up in this matter. Here we see that only 17% (12/72) of PF occurrences in object complements in 20th-century speech occur with heads that imply uncertainty, such as negated *saber* 'know' or *preguntarse* 'wonder,' compared to 49% (22/45) of temporal SF and 88% (15/17) of epistemic SF. In contrast, 32% (23/72) of PF tokens in this context occur with head verbs of belief, such as *creer* 'believe' or *pensar* 'think,' compared to 11% (5/45) of temporal SF and 6% (1/17) of epistemic SF. The semantic context most strongly associated with the PF in object complement clauses is that of certainty, at 38% (27/72) of PF occurrences in the subordinate clause context, occurring with verbs such as *ser* 'be' and *saber* 'know.' The temporal SF also occurs a fair amount in certainty contexts, at 29% (13/45), while the epistemic SF occurs only 6% (1/17) of the time with head verbs indicating certainty.

Like the 19th-century data, these findings lend support to the studies that have claimed that uncertainty is associated with the SF and certainty with the PF (e.g. Almeida & Díaz 1998, Confais 1995, Jensen 2002 and Villa-Crésap 1997), though these results also indicate that this tendency does not approach a "rule" by any means. Furthermore, the association of the SF with "promise" meaning found in the 19th century seems to have disappeared. Villa-Crésap (1997, pp.55-64) found similar associations in a quantitative study of 20th-century spoken New Mexican Spanish, reporting a rate of 50% certainty for PF and 11% for SF, and of 9% uncertainty for PF and 70% for SF. It appears that the uncertainty associated with the epistemic modality of SF is evident in both future-reference and non-future-reference contexts.

Head semantics	Temporal SF % (N)	Epistemic SF % (N)	Temporal PF % (N)	Total % (N)
Uncertainty	**49 (22)**	**88 (15)**	**17 (12)**	**36 (49)**
Imaginarse 'imagine'	2	3	--	5
No saber 'not know'	14	12	8	34
Parecer 'seem'	1	--	3	4
Preguntarse 'wonder'	1	--	1	2
Suponer 'suppose'	4	1	--	5
Belief	**11 (5)**	**6 (1)**	**32 (23)**	**22 (29)**
Creer 'believe'	3	1	19	23
Darse cuenta 'realize'	--	--	1	1
Entender 'understand'	--	--	1	1
Estar en 'be under the impression'	1	--	--	1
Pensar 'think'	1	--	2	3
Certainty	**29 (13)**	**6 (1)**	**38 (27)**	**30 (41)**
Asegurar 'assure'		1	--	1
Constar 'be evident'	--	--	1	1
Pasar 'happen'	--	--	1	1
Resultar 'end up'		--	--	1
Saber 'know'	--	--	9	9
Ser 'be'		7	1	19
Ser claro 'be clear'	2	--	--	2
Ser seguro 'be sure'	2	--	1	3
Ser verdad 'be true'	--	--	3	3
Tener en cuenta 'keep in mind'	1	--	--	1
Perception/Saying	**11 (5)**	**0 (0)**	**14 (10)**	**11 (15)**
Contar 'tell'	--	--	2	2
Decir 'say'	3	--	7	10
Mirar 'look'	--	--	1	1
Ver 'see'	2	--	--	2
Total %	100	100	100	100
Total N =	45	17	72	134

Table 7.   Heads of object complement clauses with temporal SF, epistemic SF and PF, 20th-century speech

5. Discussion

This paper has explored several linguistic factors that provide both direct and indirect evidence regarding the role of certainty as a factor in variation in Iberian Spanish future expression. First, grammatical person – particularly first-person singular – was taken as an indirect measure of intentionality (vs. prediction), and, by extension, of relative certainty. This extension was supported by the fact that the epistemic SF, which is inherently uncertain, was rarely found with first-person singular subjects. A diachronic look at temporal SF and PF showed a shift around the 17th century: in earlier times (before more frequent use of SF in epistemic contexts), the temporal SF was more likely to occur with first-person singular, though this trend reversed in later centuries. It was suggested that certainty meaning shifted from SF to PF, which opened the door for SF to come to be increasingly associated with epistemicity. The association of SF with a lack of commitment to the proposition was further supported by a brief look at concessive uses of SF.

These indirect analyses regarding certainty and future expression were then complemented by an examination of more direct evidence: head verbs in the context that make the state of mind of subject explicit, such as *suponer* 'suppose' or *saber* 'know.' Once again, epistemic SF was shown, as expected, to be nearly exclusively associated with less certain contexts. On the other hand, both SF and PF showed variability, though PF was found to be more associated with verbs indicating certainty or belief, while SF was more associated with verbs indicating uncertainty.

This paper has provided empirical evidence that certainty does indeed continue to play a role in the division of labor between future forms in modern peninsular Spanish, and that the PF is more closely associated with certainty than the SF. While for some this may seem like a moot point, since this has been argued for over half a century, new empirical methods, which permit larger-scale quantitative analyses of naturalistic data, demand that we rethink old hypotheses. For instance, Poplack & Turpin (1999) found quite different results regarding the role of certainty in future tense variation for Canadian French, contrasting both with the results presented here and with several decades of previous (largely qualitative and intuitive) research. Although in general it is quite true that researchers have little access to speakers' or writers' intentions or perception of reality, it is in very infrequent contexts, such as subordinate clauses, that we may have direct access to such information left as clues in the text. As larger corpora become available, so, too, will the revelations that these contexts can offer.

This study also has theoretical implications for the study of variation in grammaticalization. Regarding the expression of intentionality, we have two competing forms, both at different stages of grammaticalization, that traded roles: as the SF lost intention meaning, the PF gained it (cf. Poplack & Malvar 2007). This bleaching of intentionality – and thus certainty – in 17th-century SF usage allowed the SF's nearly dormant epistemic meaning to gain salience, until this became a

fairly frequent interpretation by the 20th century. This implies that competition itself can breathe new life into older forms, sparking further grammaticalization.

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Appendix: Corpus

Old Spanish

Mid-13th to mid-14th century

Calila (1250) = Anónimo. *Calila e Dimna*. ed. J. M. Cacho Blecua and M. J. Lacarra. Madrid: Castalia.

Zifar (1320) = Anónimo. 1929 [1320]. *El libro del Cavallero Zifar (El libro del cauallero de Dios)*, ed. Ch. Ph. Wagner. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Lucanor (1350) = Don Juan Manuel. 1969 [1350]. *El conde Lucanor o Libro de los enxiemplos del conde Lucanor et de Patronio*, ed. J. M. Blecua. Madrid: Castalia.

Late 15th century

Cárcel (1492) = de San Pedro, D. 1972. *Cárcel de Amor*, ed. Keith Whinnom. Madrid: Castalia.

Celestina (1499) = de Rojas, F. 1987. *La Celestina*, ed. D. S. Severin. Madrid: Cátedra.

Early 17th century

Quixote (1605-1616) = de Cervantes, Miguel. 1996. *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, ed. F. Sevilla Arroyo & A. Rey Hazas, vols. 2 and 4 of *Obras completas* by Miguel de Cervantes. Madrid: Alianza editorial-Centro de Estudios Cervantinos.

Dama boba (1562-1635) = Vega, Lope de. 2000. *La dama boba*, ed. Alonso Zamora Vicente. Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes.

Príncipe (1562-1635) = Vega, Lope de. 2003. *Comedia del Príncipe Ynocente*, transcription by Silvia Santos Galiana. Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes.

Late 18th to early 19th century

Derrota (1789) = Fernández de Moratín, Leandro. 2002 [1789]. La derrota de los pedantes. Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes.

El sí (1790-1810) = Fernández de Moratín, Leandro. 1975. *La comedia nueva; El sí de las niñas*, ed. J. Dowling and R. Andioc, Madrid: Castalia, 1975.

El afán (1831) = Carnerero, José María de (1784-1843). 2000. *El afán de figurar: comedia en cinco actos, en verso*. Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes.

Conjuración (1834) = Martínez de la Rosa, Francisco 2003 [1834]. La conjuración de Venecia, año de 1310 / Francisco Martínez de la Rosa ; edición de Marisa Payá Lledó. Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, 2003.

Late 20th to early 21st century, written corpus

Billy (1987) = Guerra de Aranguiz, Alicia. 2004 [1987]. *Billy escupe la muerte o Un fin de semana en casa de los Dupont*. Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes.

Matar (1989) = Cerdán Tato, Enrique. 2004 [1989]. *Matar con Mozart y 29 atrocidades más*. Alicante : Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes. Otra ed.: Alicante, Aguaclara.

Pobres diablos (1999) = Zamora Vicente, Alonso. 2002 [1999]. *¡Estos pobres diablos ... !* Alicante : Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes. 1ª ed. en [s.l.], Fundación Antonio Nebrija.

Algunos modos (2003) = Sánchez Soler, Mariano (1954-). 2003. *Algunos modos de vivir o de morir*. Alicante : Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes.

Late 20th century, oral corpus

COREC = *Corpus de Referencia de la Lengua Española Contemporánea: Corpus Oral Peninsular*, director F. Marcos Marín. Available at: www.lllf.uam.es/~fmarcos/ informes/corpus/corpusix.html (género conversacional).

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