

THE EXPRESSION OF FUTURITY IN SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES*

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ABSTRACT. The primary goal of this paper is to establish a comparison between the two most important forms that express futurity in Spanish and in European Portuguese, viz. the *Futuro Simple / Futuro Simples* (Simple Future) and the structure *ir* ('go') + *a / ir* ('go') + Infinitive. Whereas the Simple Future behaves quite similarly in both languages, conveying temporal information of posteriority that may be strongly constrained by modal and aspectual factors, the periphrastic construction differs considerably in Spanish and in European Portuguese. In effect, contrary to its Spanish counterpart, which is considered, in the literature, ambiguous between an aspectual (prospective) and a temporal (future) operator, the data from European Portuguese point towards a consistent temporal meaning for the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive. Here, I investigate the conditions under which these forms are licenced, in order to describe their semantic similarities and differences; moreover, since they both mainly bear temporal information, I compare the behaviour of the European Portuguese *Futuro Simples* and the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive, proposing that the former is less restricted than the latter: that is to say, aside from the location of a given situation in a future interval, *ir* ('go') + Infinitive seems to require an additional temporal boundary preventing the relevant eventuality to overlap the speech time.

Keywords: Semantics; Future tense; Simple Future; *ir* (*a*) + Infinitive; Spanish; European Portuguese.

RESUMEN. El objetivo principal de este trabajo es de establecer una comparación entre las dos formas más importantes que expresan el futuro en español y en portugués europeo, a saber, el Futuro Simple / Futuro Simples y la estructura *ir a / ir* + Infinitivo. Mientras que el futuro simple se comporta de manera bastante similar en ambos idiomas, transmitiendo información temporal de posterioridad que puede estar fuertemente restringida por factores modales y aspectuales, la construcción perifrástica difiere considerablemente en español y en portugués europeo. En efecto, al contrario de su homólogo español, que se considera, en la literatura, ambiguo entre un operador aspectual (prospectivo) y un operador temporal (futuro), los datos del portugués europeo apuntan hacia un significado temporal consistente para la estructura *ir* + Infinitivo. Por lo tanto, investigamos las condiciones bajo las cuales se licencian estas formas, con el fin de describir sus similitudes y diferencias semánticas. Además, dado que ambos contienen principalmente información temporal, comparamos el comportamiento del futuro simple en Portugués Europeo con la estructura *ir* + Infinitivo, proponiendo que el primero es menos restringido que el segundo: además de la ubicación de una situación en un intervalo futuro, *ir* + Infinitivo parece requerir un límite temporal adicional que evita que la eventualidad relevante se superponga al tiempo de habla.

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Palabras clave: semántica; tiempos del futuro; futuro simple; *ir (a) + Infinitivo*; lengua española; Portugués Europeu.

RESUMO. O objetivo central deste trabalho é o de estabelecer uma comparação entre as duas formas mais importantes que expressam a futuridade em espanhol e em português europeu, nomeadamente o Futuro Simple / Futuro Simples e a estrutura *ir a / ir + Infinitivo*. Enquanto as formas de futuro simples se comportam de maneira bastante semelhante nas duas línguas, transmitindo informação eminentemente temporal de posterioridade, que, todavia, pode ser fortemente restringida por fatores modais e aspectuais, a construção perifrástica difere consideravelmente em espanhol e em português europeu. Com efeito, ao contrário do seu equivalente espanhol, que é considerado, na literatura, ambíguo entre um operador aspectual (prospetivo) e um operador temporal (futuro), os dados do português europeu apontam para um significado temporal consistente para a estrutura *ir + Infinitivo*. Assim, investigamos as condições sob as quais estas formas são licenciadas, a fim de fornecer uma descrição das suas semelhanças e diferenças a nível semântico. Além disso, uma vez que ambas as configurações veiculam principalmente informação de natureza temporal, comparamos o comportamento do futuro simples do Português Europeu e da estrutura *ir + Infinitivo*, propondo que o primeiro é menos restritivo do que a segunda: além da localização de uma dada situação num intervalo futuro, *ir + Infinitivo* parece requerer a presença de um limite temporal adicional evitando que a eventualidade relevante se prolongue até ao momento da enunciação.

Palavras-chave: semântica; tempos do futuro; futuro simples; *ir (a) + Infinitivo*; Espanhol; Português Europeu.

1. Introduction

In her analysis of the semantic behaviour displayed by the *Futuro Simple* (simple future) in Spanish, Gennari (2000; 2002) advocates a unified treatment for the temporal and the modal interpretations triggered by this tense form. In particular, she endorses the idea that the simple future (SF) in Spanish conveys a consistent relation of posteriority regarding the Speech Time (ST). Ultimately, the well-known alternation between future and present readings ascribed to the SF would be a consequence of the interaction of its temporal profile with *Aktionsart* constraints, modal effects, and context conditions.

Although, as I will discuss later, Gennari's analysis proves to be adequate for the treatment of both the Spanish *Futuro Simple* and the *Futuro Simples* in European Portuguese (EP), it raises some interesting questions when we consider the behaviour of another structure that productively serves to locate eventualities in the future, namely the EP construction *ir* ('go') + Infinitive.²

While, in appropriate conditions that will be examined in the course of this article, the *Futuro Simples* may seem to overlap the ST, giving rise to epistemic modal meanings, as illustrated in (1), *ir* ('go') + Infinitive invariably blocks this kind of interpretation, as shown in (2):

- (1) Quanto a Gorbatchov, estará [agora] preso na sua casa de férias da Crimeia.
(adapted from CetemPúblico, *par=ext520690-nd-91b-2*) (s o ST)
«Regarding Gorbatchov, be-Fut.Simp.3.sg [now] confined in-the his house of holidays in-the Crimea»

² Of course, I am aware that there is a parallel structure in Spanish, viz. *ir* ('go') *a* ('to') + Infinitive. However, as I will discuss later, the two constructions seem to behave quite differently in Spanish and in EP, thus, their semantic characterisation will be taken to diverge considerably.

«Regarding Gorbatchov, he is [now] possibly confined in his Crimea holiday home.»

(2) # Quanto a Gorbatchov, vai estar [agora] preso na sua casa de férias da Crimeia.

«Regarding Gorbatchov, go-Pres.3.sg be-Inf [now] confined in-the his house of holidays in-the Crimea»

«Regarding Gorbatchov, he will [now] be confined in his Crimea holiday home.»

While sentence (1) provides an overlapping, present-like reading, in which the *Futuro Simple*s gets a modal interpretation of possibility or probability – the so-called “conjectural” meaning; cf. Martin, 1981; Dendale, 2001; Soto, 2008; Falas & Laca, 2014 –, sentence (2), if acceptable, can only receive a future temporal interpretation, in which the situation described by “Gorbatchov being in his Crimea holiday home” must be located in an interval that is obliged to follow the ST.

The fact that the *Futuro Simple*s and the construction *ir* (‘go’) + Infinitive, though both expressing posteriority, behave quite differently in some particular contexts leads us to believe that their linguistic properties diverge in some significant ways, and thus, that they must receive a differing semantic treatment.

On the other hand, although both EP and Spanish basically share the same linguistic strategies to express posteriority relations, taking as their evaluation source the ST – namely the simple future forms and the *ir* (‘go’) (a) + Infinitive construction³ –, some significant differences seem to arise between these two languages concerning the meaning and use of those structures.

In this way, the main goal of the present paper will be to explore and discuss some semantic properties that characterise these two means of locating situations in future intervals. In particular, I will address the following questions: (i) Is the linguistic expression of futurity in Spanish and EP exactly the same, or is there any significant variation in this respect? (ii) How can we account for the similarities and differences between the *Futuro Simple*s and the structure *ir* (‘go’) (a) + Infinitive? (iii) What is the role played by temporal and modal information in these constructions?

In order to account for these problems, in section 2, I will briefly review Gennari’s (2000; 2002) approach to the semantic properties of the SF in Spanish; then, in section 3, I investigate if this treatment can be extended to the corresponding tense forms in EP, while discussing some data supporting my assumptions. In section 4, I will compare the *ir* (‘go’) (a) + Infinitive structure with the SF, both in Spanish and in EP. I will show that, despite their similarities, the periphrastic constructions in the two languages under discussion differ considerably in some relevant respects. Finally, in section 5, I will explore the semantic properties of the two means of expressing futurity addressed in this paper and present some hypotheses that will help us to achieve an adequate description for the facts that were previously taken into analysis.

Before proceeding the discussion, two important remarks are required.

First, I will only consider the so-called cultivated or formal uses of future tenses. The source of all the examples under discussion are mainly journalistic written texts taken from *corpora* essentially constituted by newspaper articles. As an anonymous reviewer pointed out, oral and other informal uses of the future tenses (both the SF

³ Note that, when inflected in the *Pretérito Imperfeito* (a past imperfect tense), this construction takes as its Temporal Perspective Point a past interval, locating the relevant situation in a time that is posterior to it. However, since our main goal here is to investigate deictic futures, we will disregard these construction for now.

and the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive) display a quite different behaviour that requires an analysis of its own. Since the availability of oral *corpora* is limited, as compared to written ones, and the treatment of informal discourses would require distinct tools and methodological strategies, I chose to restrict myself to the scrutiny of the cultivated, written occurrences of the future tenses.

Second, I would like to clarify that the data collected in this paper, as well as the examples and observations taken from the literature, pertain to Peninsular Spanish; other regional dialects of this language, such as those spoken in Latin America, were disregarded, though a closer look at the expression of posteriority in those varieties would also be of great interest. A similar observation could be made for Portuguese: although I only consider here EP, other varieties, such as Brazilian Portuguese, or the Portuguese spoken in parts of Africa, would provide interesting contributions for a better understanding of the expression of futurity. This task, however, goes far beyond the scope of the present article.

2. Gennari's (2000; 2002) proposal

Before presenting Gennari's (2000; 2002) proposals, it is important to note that the description of the semantics of the Spanish simple future has been quite controversial and gave rise to numerous discussions in the relevant literature. The main point is that this linguistic form seems to convey both temporal and modal values and there is no consensus on the weight and role that must be ascribed to each of these meanings in the overall analysis.⁴

For some authors, such as Alarcos Llorach (1994), the *Futuro Simple* essentially conveys a modal meaning of uncertainty. This fact underlies the assumption, held by the author, that this tense, together with the Conditional, pertains to a separate Mood, the so-called Potential or Conditioned Mood.⁵

In a completely differing perspective, Rojo & Veiga (1999), based on Rojo (1974), posit that the *Futuro Simple* mainly conveys temporal information as its primary or basic value - the so-called "uso recto" - and that its modal meaning, resulting from the main temporal reading of posteriority shifting into a modal-epistemic simultaneous one, arises as a secondary or derived value - referred to as its "uso dislocado".⁶

A third line of analysis, taken, for example, by Laca (2016), states that the Spanish SF tense is systematically ambiguous between a temporal and a modal meaning, requiring the postulation of two separate semantic operators.

In both Rojo & Veiga's (1999) and Laca's (2016) proposals two important questions remain unsolved: (i) the possibility, available to the *Futuro Simple* of combining, in the same sentence, a temporal and a modal meaning (cf. (3)), and (ii) the aspectual restrictions, to be discussed shortly, that constrain the purely modal use of this tense to stative contexts.

- (3) Uber comprará la participación mayoritaria en Cornershop. Se espera que la adquisición, sujeta a los permisos de las agencias que regulan esos mercados,

⁴ In the course of this paper, I will only consider written, relatively formal contexts, mainly taken from journalistic sources. As pointed out by, e.g., Lara Bermejo (2017; 2021), the situation is quite different when we consider informal, spoken discourse. In particular, the temporal meaning ascribed to the SF seems to be being gradually replaced by modal or even by evidential values.

⁵ Predominantly modal analyses that treat the future tenses as epistemic operators are also proposed for other languages; see, e.g., Stage (2012) for French; Rocci (2000) for French and Italian; Giannakidou (2014) and Giannakidou & Mari (2013; 2018) for Italian and Greek.

⁶ In a certain way, we can assume that this kind of analysis will constitute a good departure point for proposals such as those of Gennari (2000; 2002), which I will explore in more detail in this section.

se complete a principios de 2020, y Cornershop continuará operando bajo la gerencia actual (...) (example taken from https://www.eldiario.es/economia/uber-comprara-participacion-mayoritaria-cornershop_1_1315634.html)

«Uber buy-Fut.Simp.3.sg the participation majority in Cornershop. It expect-Pres-Ind.3.sg that the acquisition, subject to the permits from the agencies that regulate-Pres.Ind.3.pl those markets, it complete-Pres.Subj.3.sg at beginnings of 2020, and Cornershop continue-Fut.Simp.3.sg operate-Ger under the management current»

«Uber will buy the majority stake in Cornershop. The acquisition, subject to permits from the agencies that regulate those markets, is expected to be completed in early 2020, and Cornershop will continue to operate under the current management.»

In a sentence such as (3), the SF form “comprará” (will buy) seems to convey both temporal and modal information. That is to say, on the one hand, it locates the situation in an interval that follows the ST, namely “a principios de 2020” (in early 2020) and, as the subsequent sentence specifies, triggers an undeniable temporal value; while, on the other hand, the future tense also clearly undertakes a modal meaning, as shown by the expression “sujeta a los permisos de las agencias que regulan esos mercados” (subject to permits from the agencies that regulate those markets). Such a sequence functions as a condition that must be met before the effective realisation of the relevant future situation takes place. So, in this context, the future tense also expresses a considerable degree of uncertainty, suggesting an epistemic modal interpretation. Furthermore, linguistic and non-linguistic contextual hints also play an important role in the overall interpretation of the text. For instance, the occurrence of the synthetic future in the embedded clause is undoubtedly associated with uncertainty, and this may be argued for on the basis of two contextual hints: embedding under the “weak” epistemic verb “esperar” (to hope / to expect) and coordination with a subjunctive embedded clause.⁷

Now, if we assume an ambiguous analysis for the *Futuro Simple*, how can we determine, in contexts such as (3), if this form is temporal or modal? What criteria should be considered in order to disambiguate those sentences?

Similarly, considering the double reading that emerges in example (3), should we classify the occurrence of the future tense in this environment as being a basic or a derived use, in accordance with Rojo & Veiga’s proposal? Or, in other words, under which circumstances should a modal interpretation of the simple future be judged a derived one?

In her analysis of the Spanish SF, Gennari (2000; 2002) seeks to solve this apparent contradiction. As with many other authors, she departs from the traditional observation that this tense has two main interpretations: a temporal one, illustrated in (4), and a modal one, presented in (5):

(4) El presidente hablará por televisión. (Gennari, 2002: example (1))

«The president talk-Fut.Simp.3.sg for television»

«The president will talk on TV.»

(5) La librería ya tendrá tu libro. (Gennari, 2002: example (4))

«The bookstore already have-Fut.Simp.3.sg your book»

⁷ I thank an anonymous reviewer for this observation.

«The bookstore will have your book by now.»

While the temporal reading (cf. (4)) essentially postulates that a given situation is located at an interval following the ST, in the same vein as the proposals made in Reichenbach (1947), for example, modal interpretations typically involve probability judgments or express a weak degree of certainty. In appropriate contexts, such as (5), they overlap with the time of utterance.

Although these interpretations are traditionally considered to correspond to two separate, polysemic meanings associated with the SF, Gennari tries to find a unifying approach, proposing a single merging semantic characterisation that covers both of the two readings under discussion.⁸

Given that the semantic properties of the *Futuro Simple* must be general enough in order to be compatible with the various concrete occurrences of this tense, the question concerning the status of the temporal and modal meanings ascribed to this form must be carefully scrutinised.

A first important observation is that, with the Spanish SF, only stative predications may be involved in non-future interpretations. Compare the following examples:

(6) Juan estará en casa ahora. (Gennari, 2002, example (3))

«Juan be-Fut.Simp.3.sg in home now»

«Juan will be at home now.»

(7) # Pedro leerá el libro ahora. (adapted from Gennari, 2002, example (14))

«Pedro read-Fut.Simp.3.sg the book now»

«Pedro will read the book now.»

Such *Aktionsart* interactions suggest that a purely modal interpretation of the Spanish SF is subject to some important restrictions. In particular, the so-called conjectural or hypothetical reading (cf. Martin, 1981; Dendale, 2001; Soto, 2008; Falas & Laca, 2014, among others), in the cases where prospectivity is not involved and the interval of the situation overlaps the ST, is confined to stative predications.

Gennari points out, thus, that stative sentences are correlated with the possibility of non-future readings – although posteriority interpretations are also perfectly available in these contexts –, while event sentences are always restricted to future readings.

Taking these observations as her departure point, Gennari assumes that the *Futuro Simple* consistently conveys temporal information, namely a posteriority relation with respect to the ST (or a given equivalent interval provided in the discourse). The fact that statives may occur, under appropriate conditions, in an overlapping relationship with the time of utterance derives from a general principle, stated for independent reasons by authors such as Kamp & Rohrer (1983), Dowty (1986) or Kamp & Reyle (1993), who suggest that statives typically overlap – and may extend beyond – their interval of occurrence.

In other words, given that statives can be true of an unbounded interval that includes, but may surpass, their original locating time, even if they are conceived to be reliably placed in the future relative to the ST, an overlapping reading with respect

⁸ Even if some analyses propose a clear separation for the *Futuro Simple* between a “temporal” and a “modal” meaning (e.g., Condoravdi, 2003; Mari, 2009; Falas & Laca, 2014; Laca, 2016), a unified approach seems much more desirable, not only theoretically, but also empirically, since, as we have seen, in a great number of occurrences, this tense form harmoniously combines temporal and modal information. For a detailed discussion about the advantages of a uniform treatment for the semantics of the *Futuro Simple*, though pointing in a quite different direction, see Escandell-Vidal, 2010; 2014.

to this interval is always available as they may persist through a period of time that both extends and includes it. So, statives in the *Futuro Simple* may be interpreted either as simultaneous or as posterior to the ST, due to the so-called superinterval implication, i.e., their ability to imply that they are true at a larger interval that includes, but may go beyond, the time (in this case a future interval) specified by the meaning of the tense.

Conversely, events are temporally bound, i.e. they must be entirely included in their interval of occurrence. So, if the *Futuro Simple* locates the propositions in an interval that follows the ST, only a posterior reading is admissible in such contexts. This prediction is confirmed by the fact that events are never possible in conjectural or hypothetical readings in which the situation overlaps the ST, as illustrated in (7).

Thus, Gennari claims that the Spanish SF consistently locates the predications in its domain in an interval that follows the ST, and that the superinterval implication permits (but does not force) present-like readings with a hypothetical or conjectural meaning, a possibility that is completely forbidden to events.

The fact that the SF typically locates the predications in a future interval with respect to the ST (or an equivalent time established in the discourse) can be confirmed by examples with embedded clauses. Consider the following sentence:

- (8) Juan dijo (anteayer) que Pedro vendrá (* ayer). (Gennari, 2002, example (26))
 «Juan say-PPerf.3.sg (the day before yesterday) that Pedro come-Fut.Simp.3.sg (* yesterday)»
 «Juan said the day before yesterday that Pedro would come yesterday.»

The only interpretative possibility for the event described in the subordinate clause (Pedro's coming) in (8) is that the situation occurs at an interval that obligatorily follows the ST; the *Futuro Simple* cannot take the interval provided by the main clause (i.e., the saying event) as its time of evaluation, as the oddness of the combination with the adverbial "ayer" (yesterday) shows.⁹

We can, then, conclude that there are not two different temporal meanings associated with the *Futuro Simple* – posteriority and simultaneity. Rather, this tense reliably conveys a relation of posteriority with respect to the ST, and the overlapping readings are a consequence of the interaction of its temporal properties with independent *Aktionsart* factors, namely the different temporal behaviour of statives and events.

This treatment proves to be more accurate than the alternatives I have referred to above. In effect, it does not require the postulation of two different operators to account for the SF tense, as was the case with the "ambiguity" solution. Moreover, it deals easily with sentences such as (9), in which a stative predicate located at a future interval also conveys a manifest epistemic modal reading (remember that, as conceived by Rojo & Veiga (1999), the shift from a posteriority basic meaning into a derived modal interpretation of the SF implies the loss of its temporal information, i.e., imposes a simultaneous reading with respect to the ST). Finally, it provides an adequate explanation for the *Aktionsart* restrictions associated to the verbal form under analysis.

⁹ Note that, if we assumed that the SF merely expressed posteriority, the event in the main clause would be a good candidate to anchor such relation and sentences such as (8) would be unproblematic, since the coming event would be located after the saying event anyway.

- (9) El portero belga y el defensa brasileño sufren serias lesiones musculares y probablemente no estarán recuperados para el partido del día 18. (example taken from <https://www.leonoticias.com/deportes/futbol/liga-campeones/thibaut-courtois-marcelo-realmadrid-20200310132811-ntrc.html?ref=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F>)
 «The goalkeeper Belgian and the defender Brazilian suffer-Pres.3.pl serious injuries muscular and probably not be-Fut.Simp.3.pl recovered for the match of-the day 18»
 «The Belgian goalkeeper and the Brazilian defender suffered serious muscle injuries and will probably not recover for the match on the 18th.»

Since, in a great number of occurrences of the Spanish SF, the sentences do not have to be true in the real world and their evaluation is dependent on a given Conversational Background, i.e., the set of premises or assumptions in the common ground of the participants in a conversation from which conclusions are drawn (cf. Kratzer, 1981; 1991; 2012), Gennari concludes that this tense behaves, in a certain extent, like modals.¹⁰ In fact, the Spanish SF, in appropriate conditions, may be paraphrased by modal verbs, as the semantic equivalence between the following examples confirms:

- (10) Todos hablan de unos pocos meses para tener los primeros prototipos, aunque Pérez Martín estima que “llegar a una fase avanzada requerirá no menos de medio año”. (example taken from https://elpais.com/sociedad/2020/02/03/actualidad/1580760205_799707.html)
 «All speak-Pres.3.pl of a some months to have the first prototypes, although Perez Martín estimate-Pres.3.sg that “arrive-Inf to a stage advanced require-Fut.simp.3.sg not less than half year”»
 «Everyone talks about it taking a few months to have the first prototypes, although Pérez Martín estimates that “reaching an advanced stage will require no less than half a year”.»
- (11) Todos hablan de unos pocos meses para tener los primeros prototipos, aunque Pérez Martín estima que “llegar a una fase avanzada debe / puede requerir no menos de medio año”.
 «All speak-Pres.3.pl of a some months to have the first prototypes, although Perez Martín estimate-Pres.3.sg that “arrive-Inf to a stage advanced shall-Pres.3.sg / may-Pres.3.sg require not less than half year”»
 «Everyone talks about it taking a few months to have the first prototypes, although Pérez Martín estimates that “reaching an advanced stage should / may require no less than half a year”.»

The interaction of the meaning of the SF with distinct conversational backgrounds gives rise to the different modal interpretations associated with this tense form (e.g. epistemic probability, prediction, conjecture, deontic obligation, etc.).

Consequently, Gennari (2000, 2002) concludes that the meaning of the *Futuro Simple* must be uniformly conceived (regardless of the particular occurrences in which it is involved), and that it is composed by a temporal operator, which quantifies over intervals, and a modal operator, which quantifies over the worlds represented in

¹⁰ Notice, as we have already pointed out, that the modal values associated to the Simple Future may occur both in present (with statives) and future (irrespective of the aspectual class of the predicate) readings of this tense. This fact prevents the establishment of a direct and one-to-one correlation between its modal and temporal properties.

the respective conversational backgrounds. Thus, for both the modal and the temporal interpretations, the context, as well as additional semantic properties such as the *Aktionsart* associated with the predication, play a crucial role when generating a specific reading for the Spanish SF.

There are, of course, many other alternative approaches to the treatment of the linguistic form under analysis. As an illustration, I will briefly discuss here the proposal developed by Escandell-Vidal (2010; 2014; 2019).

Like Gennari, Escandell-Vidal argues for a unified semantic treatment for the Spanish SF, i.e., she assumes that the various readings ascribed to this tense should be accounted for as different developments of a single basic semantic meaning.

However, she claims that neither a temporal approach (because of the existence of non-future readings such as conjectures or suppositions overlapping the ST¹¹) nor a modal analysis (because of certain commissive and directive uses, incompatible with an epistemic treatment for the future) is adequate to describe the core meaning of the *Futuro Simple*.

Instead, Escandell-Vidal suggests that “the future tense in Spanish is becoming – or has already become – a marker of evidentiality: it no longer encodes an instruction to locate an event in a future time (as defended in approaches based on time), nor does it indicate a switch to another possible world (as suggested in approaches based on modality), but rather it conveys an instruction to interpret the propositional content as a piece of information for which the only available source is a mental process of the speaker’s.” (Escandell-Vidal, 2014: 225).

According to this view, the main semantic properties of the Spanish SF are that (i) the content of the propositions has the speaker as its only source; and (ii) intuitive inference is involved in gathering the relevant information. This definition asserts, then, that the SF is completely incompatible with a scenario in which the speaker has direct evidence of the described situations. This will explain the ability of the *Futuro Simple* to express prospective readings, since the speaker cannot experience an eventuality that has not yet occurred. Prospectivity, as well as other interpretative effects sometimes associated with the Spanish SF, such as intentions, promises, offers, threats, orders, and instructions, come about as pragmatic or contextual readings derived from the proposed abstract evidential meaning.

Intuitive inferences of the speaker can also explain the other major interpretation of the *Futuro Simple*, viz. the conjectural or hypothetical meaning. A sentence like “María estará enferma” (María be-Fut.Simp.3.sg ill), expressing the non-attested possibility of María being ill at the time of utterance, seems also perfectly compatible with the definition proposed by Escandell-Vidal to define the core meaning of the Spanish SF, since it conveys a non-verified situation that is inferred by the speaker, for instance from the absence of María at her workplace.

As we have seen, two main assumptions are taken to be critical in this evidential approach. First, the only source of information must be the speaker of the discourse. However, as examples such as (12) clearly show, other sources of information may be involved in sentences displaying the *Futuro Simple*:

- (12) De acuerdo con la policía de la isla, los militares británicos utilizarán un equipo de radar de alta tecnología para ayudar a los expertos forenses, tras el hallazgo hace 10 días del cráneo de un niño en el ex centro infantil *Haut de*

¹¹ Provided that other factors are considered, namely the interference of the *Aktionsart* ascribed to the predication, this problem may be easily avoided, as shown in the discussion of Gennari’s proposal.

la Garenne. (example taken from <https://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2008/03/04/internacional/1204622785.html>)
 «In accordance with the police of the island, the military British use-Fut.Simp.3.pl an equipment of radar of high technology to help to the experts forensic following the discovery make-Pres.3.sg ten days of-the skull of a child at the former centre for children *Haut de la Garenne*»
 «According to the island's police, the British army will use high-tech radar equipment to help forensic experts, following the discovery 10 days ago of a child's skull at the former children's centre *Haut de la Garenne.*»

In this sentence, the source of information is unquestionably identified as the island's police, sharply contradicting the requirement made by Escandell-Vidal that the speaker's internal processes are the only available source for the propositional content to be communicated.¹²

A second constraint says that, with the *Futuro Simple*, intuitive inference must be conveyed. However, a sentence such as (13) seems to be problematic in this respect.

- (13) Esos pájaros migrarán a la India y a Bangladesh, y allí se encontrarán con pájaros que vienen de Europa. (example taken from <http://www.sinpermiso.info/textos/gripe-aviar-donde-esta-la-union-europea>)
 «These birds migrate-Fut.Simp.3.pl to the India and to Bangladesh, and there themselves meet-Fut.Simp.3.pl with birds that come-Pres.3.pl from Europe»
 «Those birds will migrate to India and Bangladesh, and there they will meet birds that come from Europe.»

It is hard to conceive, in a sentence such as (13), the contribution of intuitive inference as the main source of information, since our comprehension about the migratory routes followed by birds comes typically from common shared knowledge (e.g. bird watching records or scientific findings about their behaviour).

Similar obstacles to Escandell-Vidal's proposal are found in sentences such as (14):

- (14) La Vuelta 2020 se presentará en Madrid el 17 de diciembre. Ese día se desvelarán todos los detalles del recorrido de la 75^a edición, que comenzará en Utrecht (Países Bajos) el 14 de agosto y concluirá en Madrid el 6 de septiembre. (example taken from <https://www.ciclismoafondo.es/grandes-vueltas/vuelta-a-espana/articulo/vuelta-2020-se-presenta-en-madrid-17-diciembre>)
 «The *Vuelta 2020 se* present-Fut.Simp.3.sg in Madrid the 17 December. That day *se* reveal-Fut.Simp.3.pl all the details of-the tour of the 75th edition, which begin-Fut.Simp.3.sg in Utrecht (Netherlands) the 14 of August and finish-Fut.Simp.3.sg in Madrid the 6 of September»

¹² As an anonymous reviewer has pointed out, this does not mean that an evidential treatment of the Spanish SF is untenable, since evidentials are known to shift from the speaker to other "judges" when the context imposes it, particularly in attitude reports (as is the case in (12), which is reporting the police's attitude). However, the "mental inference" requirement imposed by the author, i.e. "that the propositional content (*p*) under its scope has the speaker (*S*) as its only source, and intuitive inference (*II*) as the mode of knowing, or kind of evidence" (Escandell-Vidal, 2014: 225-226), is clearly too strong, in view of the incompatibility with sentences such as these, in which the subject's inferences seem to play no relevant role at all.

«The *Vuelta 2020* will be presented in Madrid on the 17th of December. On that day, all the details of the 75th edition of the tour, which will begin in Utrecht (Netherlands) on the 14th of August and finish in Madrid on the 6th of September, will be revealed.»

Once again, this example seems to be somewhat problematic for the evidential approach presented above. While on the one hand, the source of the information is not the speaker (decisions about the presentation and the organization of a cycling race are usually taken by a sports federation and, hence, the responsibility for the information provided is ascribed to that institution), on the other, the information presented is not inferential, since it does not come from a mental process of the participants in the discourse, but rather from a predetermined schedule, thus the high degree of confidence about the occurrence of the propositions typically associated with these kinds of sentences.¹³

Finally, it is important to stress that the analysis carried out by Escandell-Vidal says nothing about *Aktionsart* effects, notably the difference between states and events concerning their ability to express hypotheses or conjectures about the ST.

In view of these observations and difficulties, it seems more reasonable to defend a proposal for the treatment of the *Futuro Simple* following the lines traced by Gennari (2000, 2002). As I will show in the next section, this proposal is also adequate for the description of the linguistic behaviour exhibited by the *Futuro Simples*, the Portuguese counterpart of the Spanish SF.

3. The Simple Future in European Portuguese

As with Spanish, discussions about the *Futuro Simples* (Simple Future) in European Portuguese recognise the double semantic character of this tense form, namely its ability to convey not only temporal but also modal information.

The most widespread explanation for this is that the Portuguese SF is ambiguous between a temporal and a modal semantic operator (see, e.g., Cunha & Cintra, 1984; Giomi, 2010).

Following this line of thought, Giomi (2010) departs from the analysis of a variety of particular uses traditionally ascribed to the SF to argue that there are two basic grammatical values associated with this tense form: a purely temporal one, that regards the situations as true in the real world and that serves essentially to locate them in an interval subsequent to the ST, and an epistemic one, that conveys a modal evaluation of the proposition, viewed as a possibility or a hypothesis that may or may not arise. These correspond to two separate, autonomous semantic representations of the *Futuro Simples*. While the purely temporal use credits the speaker with the truth of the situation in (a future interval of) the real world, the epistemic use implies some kind of uncertainty or doubt concerning the advent of the propositions under consideration.¹⁴ According to Giomi, these interpretations are mutually exclusive, that

¹³ In some cases, particularly those describing inevitable situations, arising from totally predictable natural phenomena, the only function of the *Futuro Simple* seems to be locating propositions, taken as facts, in an interval following the ST (e.g. “El cometa Borisov pasará cerca de la Tierra el 8 de diciembre” «The comet Borisov will pass near Earth on the 8th of December», example taken from <https://www.fayerwayer.com/2019/11/cometa-borisov-cerca-de-la-tierra/>). Modal and evidential meanings seem to be completely absent from these contexts.

¹⁴ It is important to point out that there is a crucial difference between the concept of “modal interpretation” we are dealing with here and the notion of “inertia futures” or “inertia histories”, as presented, for instance, by Prior (1967), Dowty (1979), Galton (2006) or Copley (2009). In fact, since a future situation has not yet occurred at the ST, we can say that all futures are branching, in the sense

is, each use of the future tense must display one (and only one) of these interpretations.¹⁵

Since the construction *ir* ('go') + Infinitive is currently most frequently employed in European Portuguese to convey the location of predications in a future interval, authors such as Oliveira (1986; 2013) or Oliveira & Lopes (1995)¹⁶ suggest that the *Futuro Simples* is losing its temporal meaning and becoming a more specialised modal constituent.¹⁷

Although this shift may be quite evident in some specific contexts, as seems to be the case in oral exchanges, it is not hard to find examples in which the Portuguese SF performs a purely temporal function.

In fact, following the observations made by Cunha (2019), we can recognise at least three different contexts in which a purely temporal interpretation of the Portuguese SF seems to be preferred, namely, (i) expressions conveying a high degree of certainty, involving adverbials or other linguistic clues that unequivocally point to the eventualities taking place in the real world (cf. (15)); (ii) propositions that express states of affairs that obligatorily arise as a logical and predictable consequence of facts pertaining to our shared common knowledge or as a result of completely expected, immutable natural phenomena (cf. (16)) and (iii) sentences in which situations are located in a well-defined, specified, future interval set by strict temporal adverbials or other precise temporal expressions (cf. (17)).

- (15) As quatro primeiras cabeças de série vão amanhã lutar por um lugar na final, onde estará {vai estar / ?? deve estar / * pode estar} de certeza uma tenista espanhola. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext1045249-des-95b-1*)¹⁸
 «The four first seeded players go-Pres.3.pl tomorrow fight-Inf for a place in the final, where be-Fut.Simp.3.sg {is going to be / ?? must be / * may be} for sure a tennis player Spanish»
 «The first four seeded players will fight for a place in the final tomorrow, where a Spanish tennis player will surely be present.»
- (16) O cometa voltará {vai voltar / ?? deve voltar / * pode voltar} a passar em 1997, mas só estará {vai estar / ?? deve estar / * pode estar} visível para quem possuir um telescópio e a paciência dos observadores do céu. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext200952-clt-soc-93b-1*)
 «The comet return-Fut.Simp.3.sg {is going to return / ?? must return / * may return} to pass-Inf in 1997, but only be-Fut.Simp.3.sg {is going to be / ?? must be / * may be} visible to who have-Inf a telescope and the patience of-the watchers of-the sky»

that there is always a set of possibly different “histories” in which the course of the happenings can go through. However, these situations may be set as simple possibilities or hypotheses, paraphraseable by structures involving modal operators such as *can* or *may* (our modal meaning) or as predictable, taken for granted, future eventualities (our temporal meaning).

¹⁵ Apart from the temporal and the modal uses, Giomi also discusses an evidential interpretation for the Portuguese SF. However, this analysis raises similar problems to those we observed when considering the hypothesis proposed by Escandell-Vidal (2010, 2014) for Spanish.

¹⁶ See also Silva (1997) for a similar proposal regarding the SF in Brazilian Portuguese.

¹⁷ See also Marques (2020) for a systematic comparison between the semantic behaviour of the conjectural or hypothetical future (conceived as an evidential) and other epistemic modal operators, such as *dever* ('must') and *poder* ('may') in European Portuguese.

¹⁸ Most of the Portuguese examples presented in this article are taken from the *corpus* CetemPúblico, available at www.linguateca.pt.

«The comet will pass again in 1997, but it will only be visible to those with a telescope and the patience of a stargazer.»

- (17) O Benfica, também detentor de oito títulos na prova, espera agora pela Supertaça, que os campeões nacionais disputarão {vão disputar / ?? devem disputar / * podem disputar} no próximo dia 21, nos Açores, frente aos portistas. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext38822-des-98a-1*)

«The Benfica, also holder of eight titles in-the competition, wait-Pres.3.sg now for-the Super Cup which the champions national dispute-Fut.Simp.3.pl {are going to dispute / ?? must dispute / * may dispute} in-the next day 21, in-the Azores, against the Porto-players»

«Benfica, who also hold eight titles in the competition, now await the Super Cup, which the national champions will contend with Porto on the 21st, in the Azores.»

The ascription of a “pure” temporal reading to these examples, observable from the preference for a paraphrase with the *ir* (‘go’) + Infinitive construction, and in contrast with the oddness of rephrasing them with modal verbs, such as *dever* (‘must’) or *poder* (‘may’), suggests that, as in Spanish, an analysis of this tense form merely based on modal grounds is not tenable. In fact, adverbials like “de certeza” (‘surely’) in (15), our shared knowledge about the behaviour of comets underlying the interpretation of (16), and the temporal and locative expressions pointing to a precise placing of the eventuality represented in (17) all favour temporal readings of the sentences under discussion.

Even when a clear epistemic modal interpretation is at issue, most of the sentences involving the *Futuro Simples* also provide temporal information, locating the relevant propositions in an interval that typically follows the ST, as shown in examples (18) and (19):

- (18) As mesmas fontes acreditam que a oposição ganhará (vai ganhar / deve ganhar / pode ganhar} o escrutínio, abrindo caminho para o fim do regime de Kaunda, que governa o país desde a independência, em 1964. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext191937-pol-91b-1*)

«The same sources believe-Pres.3.pl that the opposition win-Fut.Simp.3.sg {is going to win / must win / may win} the scrutiny, opening way to the end of-the regime of Kaunda, which govern-Pres.3.sg the country since the independence, in 1964»

«The same sources believe that the opposition will win the election, paving the way for the end of Kaunda’s regime, which has governed the country since its independence, in 1964.»

- (19) Tóquio, por sua vez, recordou, através do seu vice-ministro do Comércio, Tomio Tsutsumi, aos dois países desavindos que ambos integram a Cooperação Económica Ásia Pacífico e que “ambos têm grandes economias, pelo que a imposição mútua de sanções será {vai ser / deve ser / pode ser} contraproducente e não terá {vai ter / deve ter / pode ter} um impacte positivo na economia global”. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext4274-eco-96a-2*)

«Tokyo, for its part, remind-PPerf.3.sg, through its vice-Minister of Commerce, Tomio Tsutsumi, to the two countries disagreed that both integrate-Pres.3.pl the Cooperation Economic Asia Pacific and that “both have-Pres.3.pl big economies, so that the imposition mutual of sanctions be-Fut.Simp.3.sg {is going to be / must be / may be} counterproductive and not

have-Fut.Simp.3.sg {is going to have / must have / may have} an impact positive on-the economy global”»

«Tokyo, for its part, reminded the two disputing countries, through its Vice-Minister of Commerce, Tomio Tsutsumi, that they are both part of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation and that “both have strong economies, so the mutual imposition of sanctions will be counterproductive and will not have a positive impact on the global economy”.»

Although the situations represented in the *Futuro Simples* – “ganhar o escrutínio” (‘win the election’) in (18), “ser contraproducente” (‘be counterproductive’) and “não ter um impacto positivo na economia global” (‘not have a positive impact on the global economy’) in (19) – receive a clear epistemic modal reading, they also preserve an important temporal meaning provided by the tense form under analysis, viz. the posteriority relation with respect to the ST. Moreover, this future interpretation is possible irrespective of the *Aktionsart* assigned to the eventuality, i.e., it is perfectly compatible with both events (cf. (18)), and with states (cf. (19)).

In contrast, as in Spanish, only stative predicates may receive a hypothetical or conjectural reading in which the eventuality overlaps the “now” of utterance, as illustrated in the following examples:

- (20) Dedico esta vitória ao meu avô já falecido, que foi quem me iniciou na natação, e que [agora] estará contente com o meu feito. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext104128-nd-96b-1*)

«Dedicate-Pres.1.sg this victory to-the my grandfather now dead, that was who me initiate-PPperf.3.sg in-the swimming, and that [now] be-Fut.Simp.3.sg happy with the my achievement»

«I dedicate this victory to my late grandfather, who got me started in swimming, and who will [now] be happy with my achievement.»

- (21) Foi das primeiras pessoas a adquirir videograadores e terá uns seis. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext1069814-clt-92a-2*)

«Be-PPperf.3.sg of-the first people to acquire video recorders and have-Fut.Simp.3.sg about six»

«He was one of the first people to acquire a video recorder and would go on to have about six of them.»

Sentences (20) and (21) present two peculiar characteristics that must be pointed out: on the one hand, they convey an essentially modal meaning, as the paraphrases in (22) and (23) confirm; while on the other, the propositions are evaluated in an alternative world, i.e., a world that is not necessarily the real one, where they are taken to occur in an interval that encompasses the ST, thus making them fully compatible with adverbials such as “agora” (‘now’).

- (22) Dedico esta vitória ao meu avô, que deve estar contente com o meu feito.

«Dedicate-Pres.1.sg this victory to-the my grandfather, that must-Pres.3.sg be happy with the-my achievement»

«I dedicate this victory to my grandfather, who must be happy with my achievement.»

- (23) Foi das primeiras pessoas a adquirir videograadores e deve ter uns seis.

«Be-PPerf.3.sg of-the first people to acquire video recorders and must-Pres.3.sg have about six»
 «He was one of the first people to acquire a video recorder and must/may have about six of them.»

However, whenever events occur in similar contexts, this kind of conjectural or hypothetical reading, covering the interval in which the predication takes place and the ST, is completely ruled out, as shown by the following sentences:

- (24) # A Maria jogará ténis agora.¹⁹ (process)²⁰
 «The Maria play-Fut.Simp.3.sg tennis now»
 «Maria will play tennis now.»
- (25) # O João lerá um livro agora. (culminated process)
 «The João read-Fut.Simp.3.sg a book now»
 «João will read a book now.»
- (26) # O gato partirá o vidro agora. (culmination)
 «The cat break-Fut.Simp.3.sg the glass now»
 «The cat will break the glass now.»

The relevance of the *Aktionsart* effects discussed so far becomes particularly evident in contexts in which events are coerced into states.

In fact, it is well known that linguistic forms such as the *Progressivo* (Progressive) and the habitual construction typically ascribe stative properties to the basic profile of the events in their scope.²¹ So, it will be of no surprise then that, if an event is “stativised” by these operators, it will easily become compatible with a hypothetical interpretation overlapping the ST, as shown in (27) with a Progressive, and in (28) with a habitual configuration:

- (27) Starr estará a investigar [agora] se Clinton pediu ao seu conselheiro Vernon Jordan para convencer Monica Lewinsky a mentir sobre a alegada relação entre ambos. (= deve estar a investigar) (CetemPúblico, par=ext39141-nd-98a-1)
 «Starr be-Fut.Simp.3.sg to investigate [now] whether Clinton ask-PPerf.3.sg to-the his advisor Vernon Jordan to convince Monica Lewinsky to lie about the alleged relationship between both» (= must be investigating).
 «Starr is probably investigating [now] whether Clinton asked his adviser Vernon Jordan to convince Monica Lewinsky to lie about their alleged relationship.»
- (28) O João fumará agora dois maços de tabaco por dia. (= deve fumar)

¹⁹ Keep in mind that, in these examples, “now” must strictly correspond to “at this precise moment”. A reading in which “now” is equivalent to “in a moment” is not relevant to our discussion, since, in such cases, the situation at issue is interpreted as (immediately) following the ST, i.e., giving rise to a posteriority relation, and here we are only concerned with contexts displaying overlapping interpretations.

²⁰ In this article, I will follow the aspectual classification implemented by Moens (1987) and Moens & Steedman (1988) as a refinement of Vendler (1967).

²¹ Arguments in favour of the idea that the Progressive shifts events into states may be found, e.g., in Dowty (1979), Moens (1987) and Cunha (1998). The close relation between habitual sentences and stativity is discussed, e.g., in Katz (1995), Lenci (1995), Lenci & Bertinetto (2000), Bertinetto & Lenci (2012) and, specifically for EP, in Cunha (2004/2007; 2012).

«The João smoke-Fut.Simp.3.sg now two packs of tobacco a day» (= must smoke)
 «João probably smokes two packs of tobacco a day now.»

Of course, this overlapping conjectural reading is not obligatory with progressives and habituais, and a posteriority interpretation is also possible for these constructions, as, in fact, is the case with practically all other statives. The following sentences exemplify a progressive configuration (cf. (29)) and a habitual one (cf. (30)) with clear future interpretations, even if they are eventually combined with more or less prominent modal meanings.

- (29) E, de acordo com uma previsão da «Information Week», no ano 2001, 30 por cento dos trabalhadores de escritório já estarão a usar ferramentas de reconhecimento de voz. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext26977-com-98a-2*)
 «And, of accordance with a forecast of-the “Information Week” in-the year 2001, 30 per cent of-the workers of office already be-Fut.Simp.3.pl to use tools of recognition of voice»
 «And, according to a forecast by “Information Week”, in 2001, 30 percent of office workers will already be using speech recognition tools.»
- (30) Leonardo Ferraz de Carvalho, colaborador de «O Independente», e Daniel Amaral, ex-columnista do semanário «O Jornal», para além de Joaquim Malato de Sousa, são os três comentadores que escreverão regularmente nas páginas da revista. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext1023002-eco-92a-1*)
 «Leonardo Ferraz de Carvalho, contributor of “O Independente”, and Daniel Amaral, former-columnist of-the weekly “O Jornal”, in addition to Joaquim Malato de Sousa, be-Pres.3.pl the three commentators who write-Fut.Simp.3.pl regularly in-the pages of-the magazine»
 «Leonardo Ferraz de Carvalho, contributor to «O Independente»; Daniel Amaral, former columnist for the weekly newspaper «O Jornal»; and Joaquim Malato de Sousa, are the three commentators who will write regularly in the pages of the magazine.»

In summary, we conclude that, in EP, the *Futuro Simples* is perfectly able to convey both temporal and modal information. Nevertheless, a pure modal treatment for this tense is quite inappropriate since there are several contexts in which a strictly temporal reading is called for; namely, when expressions assigning the undisputable occurrence of the situation are involved, when considering common shared knowledge or natural immutable states of affairs, or when the situation is accurately located in a specific future time interval. Moreover, even when modal readings are clearly tied to this form, they typically coexist with its temporal meaning of posteriority with respect to the utterance time. The only exceptions are some (basic or derived) stative predications which, in appropriate conditions, may force a hypothetical or conjectural interpretation overlapping the ST.

The picture I have illustrated for the SF in EP is remarkably similar to that of its Spanish counterpart. That is to say, the solution provided by Gennari (2000, 2002) to account for the *Futuro Simple* in Spanish can easily be extended to deal with the Portuguese data. In particular, the overlapping relationship exhibited by conjectural structures may be seen as the result of the interaction between the systematic temporal characteristics of the future tense, i.e., prospectivity, and the attributes ascribed to

stative predications, or rather, the so-called superinterval property, enabling them to extend beyond their reference time.²²

The question that now arises can be formulated as follows: do these similarities extend to other means of expressing futurity in the two languages under discussion, namely to the structure *ir* ('go') (*a*) + Infinitive? This problem will be considered in the next section of this article.

4. *Ir* ('go') *a* ('to') + Infinitive in Spanish vs *ir* ('go') + Infinitive in European Portuguese

As we have seen, both the Portuguese *Futuro Simple* and the Spanish *Futuro Simple* behave quite similarly and share important semantic features; so much so that an analogous treatment can be adequately adduced to deal with these two tense forms.

Conversely, the other main structures used to express futurity in these languages – *ir* ('go') + Infinitive in Portuguese and *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive in Spanish –, despite their formal parallel, manifest some notable differences that point to a semantically divergent core meaning, as the discussion in the present section will make clear.

Nevertheless, there exist some common properties that establish a strong connection between these two constructions, in particular concerning the conditions that favour their appearance in discourse.

According to a large number of grammarians, the distinction between the SF and the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive in Spanish essentially derives from pragmatic principles associated with social, geographic, or stylistic variation. Authors such as López García (1990) or Cartagena (1996; 1999) assume that the dissimilar distribution of the SF and the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive results from the fact that the former is used in formal contexts, while the latter occurs in informal environments.

In the same vein, Cartagena (1996) and Sedano (2005), based on statistical data, suggest that the difference between the *Futuro Simple* and the construction *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive may be seen as a reflection of the distinction between written and spoken discourse: *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive would characterise oral exchanges, while the SF would be an identifying property of written texts.

Likewise, departing from the study of the corresponding structures in Brazilian Portuguese, Silva (1997), Barbosa (2007) and Oliveira (2011) point in the same direction: the Portuguese *Futuro Simple* is preferably used in formal or supervised discourses, typically associated with written production, while the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive occurs mainly in oral, spontaneous exchanges.

Even if these observations are empirically acceptable, they are manifestly insufficient to account for the overall distribution of the above-mentioned forms. In particular, as pointed out by Bravo Martín (2008), for example, if the difference between the SF and the structure *ir* ('go') (*a*) + Infinitive were essentially pragmatic in nature, it would follow that in appropriate contexts, and irrespective of the conveyed meaning, the two tenses would be interchangeable, which is contrary to facts.

Indeed, Bravo Martín (2008: 98) presents several contexts of occurrence in which the *Futuro Simple* and the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive behave quite differently, demonstrating that the discrepancy between them exceeds the pragmatic dimension and relies on the semantic domain. The following contrast illustrates this point:

²² For more details, see the explanation presented in section 2 above.

- (31) Si su padre va a morir, él recibirá toda la herencia. (Bravo Martín, 2008: p. 98, ex. (6d))
 «If his father go-Pres.3.sg to die-Inf, he receive-Fut.Simp.3.sg all the inheritance»
- (32) * Si su padre morirá, él recibirá toda la herencia. (ibid, ex. (6e))
 «If his father die-Fut.Simp.3.sg, he receive-Fut.Simp.3.sg all the inheritance»
 «If his father dies, he will receive the entire inheritance.»

Regardless of the pragmatic conditions under which these sentences may be produced, it is clear that only the construction *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive in (31) is unproblematically accepted, the SF, in contrast, being completely ruled out, independently of the circumstances of use in which it appears. This proves that, despite their important similarities, these two linguistic means to express the future must be associated with different semantic characterisations.

Similar observations may be extended to EP. In fact, as noted, for instance, in Cunha (2021), there are certain contexts in which the alternation between the *Futuro Simple* and the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive is impossible, irrespective of the pragmatic conditions that are met. The case of the so-called 'future of conjecture' with a present interpretation is striking, as the following contrast demonstrates:

- (33) O assaltante terá uns vinte e cinco anos.
 «The thief have-Fut.Simp.3.sg a-pl twenty-five years»
 «The thief is about twenty-five years old.»
- (34) * O assaltante vai ter uns vinte e cinco anos.
 «The thief go-Pres.3.sg have-Inf a-pl twenty-five years»

Consequently, in EP, it also seems necessary to postulate a distinction between the SF and the construction *ir* ('go') + Infinitive built on semantic grounds, insofar as an approach based on purely pragmatic criteria insufficiently accounts for the observed data.

Another hypothesis that has been adduced to distinguish the SF from the structure *ir* ('go') (*a*) + Infinitive consists of considering the former as a modal operator, and the latter as a purely temporal one (in this respect, see, e.g., the discussion in Oliveira, 1986; 2013; Silva, 1997).

The following contrasts – (35)-(36) for Spanish, and (37)-(38) for EP – make evident this discrepancy regarding the preferred modal or temporal interpretation of the structures at hand:

- (35) Las obras empezarán en mayo, según ha informado el Ayuntamiento en nota de prensa. (= las obras deben de empezar... ('the works may start...'))
 (example taken from <https://www.20minutos.es/noticia/3314284/0/obras-edificio-municipal-calle-paz-empezaran-mayo/>)
 «The works start-Fut.Simp.3.pl in May, as have-Pres.3.sg report-PPart the Council in release of press»
 «The works will/may start in May, as reported by the City Council in a press release.»
- (36) Las obras van a empezar en mayo, según ha informado el Ayuntamiento en nota de prensa.
 «The works go-Pres.3.pl to start-Inf in May, as have-Pres.3.sg report-PPart the Council in release of press»

- «The works will start in May, as reported by the City Council in a press release.»
- (37) As obras começarão em breve e prevê-se que cheguem ao fim no próximo ano. (= as obras devem começar... ('the works may start...'))
(CetemPúblico, *par=ext290605-soc-96a-2*)
«The works start-Fut.Simp.3.pl in soon and predict-Pres.3.sg-it that come-Pres.Subj.3.pl at-the end in-the next year»
«The works will/may start shortly and are expected to end next year.»
- (38) As obras vão começar em breve e prevê-se que cheguem ao fim no próximo ano.
«The works go-Pres.3.pl start-Inf in soon and predict-Pres.3.sg-it that come-Pres.Subj.3.pl at-the end in-the next year»
«The works will start shortly and are expected to end next year.»

In sentences (35) and (37) the most prominent reading of the SF, both in Spanish and in EP, seems to be a modal one, that is to say, one in which the beginning of the “works” is somehow presented as a possibility or as a probability. The substitution of the SF by a modal expression like *deber / dever* (‘may’) in the above contexts confirms the adequacy of this interpretation.

In contrast, the structure *ir* (‘go’) (*a*) + Infinitive, in similar contexts, typically conveys temporal information, since it merely locates the described situation in an interval following the ST. This does not mean, however, as an anonymous reviewer pointed out, that linguists making this distinction assume that the periphrastic future is “anti-modal”, only that it does not contribute a modal semantic on its own. However, as we will see, modal meanings can be associated to the periphrasis both in Spanish and in EP.

Though it is undeniable that the Portuguese *Futuro Simples* and the Spanish *Futuro Simple* are better prepared to convey modal information than their corresponding periphrastic forms, it is not possible to sustain the idea that this property is decisive when considering the semantic profile of these constructions. In other words, it is empirically wrong to assume that, in all circumstances, the SF behaves as a modal operator while the structure *ir* (‘go’) (*a*) + Infinitive expresses temporality.

In effect, as I have discussed at length in the previous sections, there are several contexts in which the SF, both in Spanish and in Portuguese, conveys irrefutable temporal information, namely, in sentences expressing a high degree of certainty; in sentences stating naturally predictable happenings; or in temporally settled situations, meaning that, as we have demonstrated, a purely modal treatment for these tense forms is untenable.²³

On the other hand, it is not hard to find contexts in which the structure *ir* (‘go’) (*a*) + Infinitive is involved in modal readings. Kornfeld (2014) extensively discusses a range of deontic and epistemic uses associated with the *ir* (‘go’) *a* + Infinitive construction in American Spanish. An illustrative example for the modal occurrences of this form in Peninsular Spanish is given in Bravo Martín (2008: 238, ex. (68)):

²³ Remember that, as I have already pointed out, due to the nature of the future as a not-yet-actualized time, it is not mandatory that the situations have to occur effectively in the real world, but only that they must be taken as being true in a posterior interval relative to the evaluation time. It is important to stress, once more, the difference between the ontological ramifying nature of the future and its linguistic interpretations as a temporal or a modal operator.

- (39) A: El coche hace un ruido muy raro. B: (Eso) Va a ser la correa del ventilador.
 «A: The car make-Pres.3.sg a noise very strange. B: (That) go-Pres.3.sg to be-Inf the belt of-the fan»
 «A: The car makes a very strange noise. B: That must be the fan belt.»²⁴

In (39) the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive does not locate the relevant eventuality in an interval following the ST; instead, it conveys a simultaneous hypothetical or conjectural interpretation in which "being the fan belt" would turn out to be a possible (but not confirmed) explanation for the strange noise heard by speaker A.²⁵

Similar observations can be extended to the EP construction *ir* ('go') + Infinitive: although the conditions under which this structure conveys modality differ considerably from those that govern its Spanish counterpart, it is not difficult to find contexts that favour modal readings of such periphrastic forms, as pointed out by Cunha (2021), for instance. Consider the following example:

- (40) Se ganhar a lotaria, o João vai comprar uma mansão enorme.
 «If win-Fut.Subj.3.sg the lottery, the João go-Pres.3.sg buy-Inf a mansion huge»
 «If he wins the lottery, João will buy a huge mansion.»

Conditional clauses like the one presented in (40) create an alternative world, i.e., a world that differs, in some important respects, from the real one. In this sense, the speaker is not committed to the truth of the consequent clause, in that (s)he does not take the buying of a huge mansion by João as a situation that will definitely take place in a future interval. Hence, the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive can receive and convey modal interpretations, showing that a clear-cut opposition between temporal and modal meaning is not the best way to treat the behaviour of this structure.

Although the modal vs. temporal analysis seems to correctly predict some of the most relevant contrasts shown by the SF and the periphrastic construction, it is not however, sufficient to explain their overall divergences.

Several other hypotheses for describing the difference between the SF and the structure *ir* ('go') (*a*) + Infinitive – namely those having to do with intentionality or distance from the utterance time – have been put forward in the literature, but they equally face critical problems.

Regarding the role played by intentionality, it is sometimes suggested that the structure *ir* ('go') (*a*) + Infinitive is somehow dependent on the presence of a volitional or purposeful subject (see, e.g., Fernández de Castro, 1995). However, sentences such as (41) for Spanish or (42) for Portuguese clearly show that the involvement of an agentive, volitional subject cannot be taken as an adequate criterion

²⁴ Bravo Martín (2008: chapter 5, sections 4 and 5) extensively discusses several modal uses associated to the Spanish construction *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive, namely the epistemic rhetoric-exclamative use, the deontic use, the contrafactual uses and the probability reading. Since it is not my goal in this paper to provide a deep discussion about the modal interpretations exhibited by the construction at hand, I will not further explore this issue here. I only want to stress that, contrary to what is said in some prevalent treatments, the data confirm that the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive may also convey, given the appropriate conditions, modal information. On this matter, see also Moreno Burgos (2014, 2.3).

²⁵ Note that the corresponding sentence is completely ruled out in EP, a language that excludes the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive from appearing in conjectural configurations imposing any kind of overlapping reading with respect to the ST (cf. "A: O carro está a fazer um ruído muito esquisito. B: (Isso) * vai ser a correia do ventilador").

to license the construction in question. In fact, the periphrasis *ir* ('go') (*a*) + Infinitive does not reveal any restriction with respect to the kind of subject that can co-occur with it:

- (41) La nieve va a caer en las montañas, cada vez en cota más alta.
(example taken from <https://www.rtve.es/alacarta/videos/el-tiempo/siguen-lluvias-fuertes-galicia-extremadura/3896939/>)
«The snow go-Pres.3.sg to fall-Inf in the mountains, each time in a level plus high»
«The snow is going to fall in the mountains, each time at a higher level.»
- (42) Vai chover esta noite. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext384877-clt-93a-1*)
«Go-Pres.3.sg rain-Inf this night»
«It's going to rain tonight.»

The temporal distance between the ST and the interval in which the upcoming situation occurs, a condition suggested, for example, by García Fernández (2000), cannot be taken as an operative criterion either. In fact, considering the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive as a "near future" and the SF, contrastingly, as a "remote" one becomes problematic in face of the following set of examples:

- (43) "El trole partirá en media hora. Tengan en cuenta que solo atenderá 10 paradas." (example taken from <https://www.elcomercio.com/actualidad/trolebus-nocturno-tuvo-acogida.html>)
«The trolley leave-Fut.Simp.3.sg in half hour. Have-Pres.Subj.3.pl in mind that only attend-Fut.Simp.3.sg 10 stops»
«The tram will leave in half an hour. Keep in mind that it will only make 10 stops.»
- (44) ¡Despierta! El taxi va a llegar en media hora. (example taken from <https://supervivienteenguernsey.wordpress.com/2013/11/04/mision-imposible/>)
«Wake-up-Imper. The taxi go-Pres.3.sg to arrive-Inf in half hour»
«Wake up! The taxi will arrive in half an hour.»
- (45) La moto de agua Taiga Orca, por ejemplo, llegará dentro de un año con hasta tres variantes a elegir y con un precio de acceso más que ajustado, desde 12.640 euros. (example taken from <https://www.motorpasionmoto.com/motos-electricas/taiga-orca-dos-horas-diversion-electrificada-moto-agua-que-costara-12-600-euros>)
«The motorbike of water Taiga Orca, for example, arrive-Fut.Simp.3.sg within of a year with at-least three variants to choose and with a price of access plus than adjusted, from 12.640 euros»
«The Taiga Orca jet ski, for example, will be released within a year with up to three variants to choose from and an accessible price, starting at 12,640 euros.»
- (46) Por más que no queramos pensar en ello, el día en que los combustibles fósiles se agoten va a llegar, dentro de un año, cien o mil, pero va a llegar. (example taken from <https://www.motorpasion.com.mx/salones-del-automovil/nanoflowcell-quant-quantino>)
«As much that not want-Pres.Subj.1.pl think-Inf in that, the day in which the fuels fossil *se*-Pass run-out-Pres.Subj.3.pl go-Pres.3.sg to arrive-Inf within of a year, one-hundred or one-thousand, but go-Pres.3.sg to arrive-Inf»

«As much as we don't want to think about it, the day when fossil fuels run out is going to come, in one year, a hundred or a thousand; but it will come.»

As the examples above show, both the *Futuro Simple* and the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive may occur unproblematically in sentences that express varying lengths of time between the speech point and the interval in which the future situation takes place, suggesting that this cannot be assumed as a distinctive criterion for the semantic characterisation of these two forms.

Similar observations seem to be equally adequate to account for the corresponding EP constructions, as the following examples demonstrate:

- (47) Passa da meia-noite e meia quando é anunciado que o fogo-de-artifício começará dentro de cinco minutos. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext1300518-soc-96b-2*)
 «Pass-Pres.3.sg of-the midnight and half when be-Pres.3.sg announced that the firework start-Fut.Simp.3.sg within of five minutes»
 «It is after 12:30am when it is announced that the fireworks will start in five minutes.»
- (48) «Atenção, senhoras e senhores, o espectáculo *Acqua Matrix* vai-se iniciar dentro de cinco minutos». (CetemPúblico, *par=ext1234308-soc-98a-2*)
 «Attention, ladies and gentlemen. The show *Acqua Matrix* go-Pres.3.sg-se start-Inf within of five minutes»
 «Attention, ladies and gentlemen, the *Acqua Matrix* show will start in five minutes.»
- (49) O planeta ultrapassará o limiar dos seis mil milhões de habitantes dentro de dois anos. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext375234-soc-96a-2*)
 «The planet exceed-Fut.Simp.3.sg the threshold of-the six million of inhabitants within of two years»
 «The planet will exceed the threshold of six billion inhabitants in two years.»
- (50) A Ford anunciou que vai construir na Europa, dentro de dois anos, uma nova fábrica de motores de automóveis. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext104050-eco-91b-1*)
 «The Ford announce-PPerf.3.sg that go-Pres.3.sg build-Inf in-the Europe, within of two years, a new plant of engines of cars»
 «Ford has announced that it will build a new car engine plant in Europe within two years.»

Furthermore, besides the issue concerning the appropriate characterisation of the semantic distinction between the SF and the periphrastic construction, we have to face another relevant problem, specifically, a satisfactory description of the differences in the linguistic behaviour that arise between the Spanish structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive and its Portuguese counterpart.

In fact, despite the similarities already discussed, it is easy to find examples in which the Spanish structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive differs considerably from its EP equivalent. Let us briefly explore some of them.

According to Bravo Martín (2008) and Moreno Burgos (2013; 2014), in the absence of temporal adverbials expressing posteriority, the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive establishes a strong relationship with the ST. This in turn, favours the emergence of interpretations that are correlated, to some extent, to concepts such as those of imminence, inevitability or intentionality.

In this respect, Bravo Martín (2008: 193) presents the following examples, the former illustrating an imminential reading, the latter an intentional one:

- (51) No te sientes en esa roca. Se va a caer. (Bravo Martín, 2008: 193, ex. (2a))
 «Not you sit-Pres.Subj.2.sg in that rock. It go-Pres.3.sg to fall-Inf»
 «Don't sit on that rock. It's going to fall.»
- (52) A: ¿Puede alguien ir a visitar a Juan mañana al hospital? B: Voy a ir yo. (Bravo Martín, 2008: 193, ex. (2c))
 «A: Can-Pres.3.sg someone go-Inf to visit-Inf to Juan tomorrow at-the hospital? B: Go-Pres.1.sg to go-Inf I»
 «A: Can someone visit Juan at the hospital tomorrow? B: I'm going.»

A first observation that should be made is that, although imminence, inevitability or intentionality may be associated with the Portuguese structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive, such meanings cannot be taken as characterising or defining features for this configuration. In fact, contrary to what the literature postulates for its Spanish equivalent, the Portuguese construction *ir* ('go') + Infinitive easily conveys bare future information even when temporal adverbials are completely absent, as the following sentences demonstrate:

- (53) Na Avenida da República vai cair mais um prédio, de cinco andares, onde era a antiga Pastelaria Ideal. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext837478-nd-91a-1*)
 «In-the Avenida da República go-Pres.3.sg fall-Inf more one building, of five floors, where be-Imp.3.sg the ancient Pastelaria Ideal»
 «Another five-storey building will collapse in Avenida da República where the ancient Pastelaria Ideal was located.»
- (54) A música deles vai sobreviver, mesmo que seja raramente tocada. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext151701-clt-97b-2*)
 «The music of-them go-Pres.3.sg survive-Inf, even that be-Pres.Subj.3.sg rarely play-PPart»
 «Their music will survive, even if it is rarely played.»

As shown in (53) and (54), the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive in Portuguese is perfectly able to locate the relevant eventualities in a future interval, independently of the presence or absence of adverbials or equivalent expressions conveying posteriority. This behaviour contrasts with the Spanish construction *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive that, according to the observations made by Bravo Martín (2008) and Moreno Burgos (2013; 2014), only expresses a purely temporal meaning when combined with this kind of linguistic elements.

In sentences where adverbials pointing to a future time interval are absent, both Bravo Martín and Moreno Burgos claim that the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive expresses Prospective Aspect. This assumption relies on the idea that such construction is somehow tied to the present, i.e., that, in the contexts under analysis, it manifests some kind of present relevance.

To support this hypothesis, Bravo Martín (2008) considers a set of environments in which the link between the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive and the ST seems to be particularly evident.

One case in point concerns when-clauses with a present interpretation, as shown in (55)-(56):

- (55) Pedro se levanta cuando Ariel se va a marchar al trabajo. (Bravo Martín, 2008: 182, ex. (39a))
 «Pedro himself get-up-Pres.3.sg when Ariel himself go-Pres.3.sg to walk-Inf to-the work»
 «Pedro gets up when Ariel is leaving for work.»
- (56) * Pedro se levanta cuando Ariel se marchará al trabajo. (Bravo Martín, 2008: 182, ex. (39c))
 «Pedro himself get-up-Pres.3.sg when Ariel himself walk-Fut.Simp.3.sg to-the work»
 «Pedro gets up when Ariel will leave for work.»

The well-formedness of (55) in comparison with the strangeness of (56) is explained by the fact that the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive expresses a tense that pertains to the present domain, thus being compatible with the tense form that occurs in the main clause, i.e., the simple present.²⁶ In contrast, the SF would locate the relevant situation in an interval that follows the utterance time, hence giving rise to a temporal mismatch between the two clauses.

Regarding EP, in contrast, both *ir* ('go') + Infinitive and the SF are anomalous in similar contexts, as the following examples illustrate:

- (57) * O Pedro levanta-se quando a Maria vai sair para o trabalho.
 «The Pedro get-up-Pres.3.sg-himself when the Maria go-Pres.3.sg leave-Inf to the work»
 «Pedro gets up when Maria is leaving for work.»
- (58) * O Pedro levanta-se quando a Maria sairá para o trabalho.
 «The Pedro get-up-Pres.3.sg-himself when the Maria leave-Fut.Simp.3.sg to the work»
 «Pedro gets up when Maria will leave for work.»

As the comparison between (57) and (58) reveals, in the context of when-clauses the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive in Portuguese behaves much like the SF given that it cannot be combined with main clauses displaying the *Presente do Indicativo* (simple present) tense. So, if the reasoning put forward by Bravo Martín is correct, we must conclude that the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive in EP, unlike its Spanish counterpart, does not pertain to the present domain. Rather, it complies with the behaviour of the SF, placing the situations in an interval that is obliged to be located after the ST.

According to Bravo Martín (2008) and Moreno Burgos (2014), another context in which the distinction between the SF and the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive becomes quite evident relates to the possible combination with punctual deictic adverbials that point to the present, in particular the adverbial *neste momento* ('right now') (see also Camus Bergareche, 2006).

Since a deictic adverbial such as *neste momento* ('right now') refers to the ST interval, only the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive, which displays present relevance, can be combined with it. The SF is excluded, as the following contrast, offered by Moreno Burgos (2014), confirms:

²⁶ The relation of posteriority that arises between the two eventualities would be a consequence of the semantic properties that characterise the Prospective Aspect ascribed to the periphrasis; more on this in Bravo Martín (2008), and later in the next section.

- (59) En este momento va a comenzar el recital. (Moreno Burgos, 2014: 84, ex. (5))
 «In this moment go-Pres.3.sg to begin-Inf the recital»
 «The recital is going to begin right now.»
- (60) * En este momento comenzará el recital. (Moreno Burgos, 2014: 84, ex. (6))
 «In this moment begin-Fut.Simp.3.sg the recital»
 «The recital will begin right now.»

Such a sharp contrast, however, is not present in EP: based on intuitions provided by native Portuguese speakers, I can say that both the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive and the SF do not normally co-occur with this kind of adverbials (if they are accepted, the described situations are interpreted as occurring at an interval that immediately follows the speech time²⁷), as (61) and (62) illustrate. This would be the expected consequence of the temporal mismatch between the deictic present meaning of the adverbial and the future-oriented value of the tenses that seem to prevail in this kind of construction. In any case, in this particular context, there are no significant differences, regarding their interpretation, between the SF and the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive in that a posteriority reading is the only available possibility.

- (61) # Neste momento vai começar o recital. (only the posteriority reading is available, not a simultaneous one)
 «In-this moment go-Pres.3.sg begin-Inf the recital»
 «The recital is going to begin right now.»
- (62) # Neste momento começará o recital. (only the posteriority reading is available, not a simultaneous one)
 «In-this moment begin-Fut.Simp.3.sg the recital»
 «The recital will begin right now.»

Finally, Bravo Martín (2008) claims that, given the appropriate conditions, the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive may occur in structures conveying a conjectural or a hypothetical meaning.²⁸ To support this idea, she presents examples such as the following:

- (63) Pedro va a tener los ojos azules y va a medir 1,95 m. (Bravo Martín, 2008: 237, ex. (67))
 «Pedro go-Pres.3.sg to have-Inf the eyes blue and go-Pres.3.sg to measure-Inf 1,95 m.»
 «Pedro must have blue eyes and must be 1.95 m tall.»

In its conjectural reading, this example signifies that, at the utterance time, the speaker strongly believes (but does not know for sure) that Pedro has blue eyes and is 1,95 m tall.

²⁷ An exception is made, of course, to the conjectural or hypothetical readings of the future tense that I have discussed in section 2, where an overlapping relationship with the ST is permitted.

²⁸ It should be stressed, however, that there is no agreement about this topic, since not all linguists are sure about the adequacy of a conjectural or hypothetical reading associated with the Spanish structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive. For instance, one of the reviewers of this article considers example (63), taken from Bravo Martín (2008), to be incongruous. For a discussion providing a somewhat different view on this topic, see, e.g., Sedano (1994).

As I have pointed out earlier, this conjectural or hypothetical reading is completely absent in sentences with the Portuguese structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive. In these cases, only the temporal prospective meaning is available. Consider the following illustrative example:

- (64) O edifício dos Correios vai medir 80 m.
 «The building of-the Post Office go-Pres.3.sg measure-Inf 80 m»
 «The Post Office building will measure 80 m.»

A sentence like (64) cannot be interpreted as a hypothesis about an already existing building; the only interpretation available for the example at hand is a predictive one. That is, at the time of utterance it is claimed that, in the future, given the knowledge about plans and projects for the edifice, the Post Office building will measure 80 m.

This behaviour sharply contrasts with that exhibited by the SF, which, in similar conditions, may convey a conjectural reading, as shown in (65):

- (65) O edifício dos Correios medirá 80 m.
 «The building of-the Post Office measure-Fut.Simp.3.sg 80 m»
 «The Post Office building will measure 80 m.»

Besides the future-oriented reading, as ascribed to (64), the sentence containing the *Futuro Simple*s may also receive a conjectural or hypothetical one, entailing the existence of the Post Office building at the utterance time and conveying that, at the interval in question, the speaker is not entirely sure about the actual height of the building; thus, it simply presents the information as a probability in the present that requires some kind of confirmation.

In summary, we can say that the EP structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive differs from its Spanish counterpart in that (i) it is not tied to any kind of present relevance, since it consistently locates the situations in a future interval, with no explicit dependence on the ST; and (ii) it is less suitable to express modal meanings and, when this does happen, a prospective interpretation is always required.²⁹

Nevertheless, when the Spanish construction *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive combines with prospective temporal adverbials or other equivalent expressions, its connection to an interval that must be relevant at the present time is lost and a purely temporal future meaning is required. In these contexts, the differences between the periphrasis and the SF seem to disappear, given that both forms express the temporal location of a situation at a future interval.³⁰

²⁹ This would explain the oddity of the so-called conjectural reading in the present domain exhibited by the Portuguese structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive in comparison to the appropriateness of the equivalent Spanish form in similar contexts. Once more, these data would confirm the idea that, contrary to the construction *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive, which may display, in favourable circumstances, a strong connection with a present interval (the property that Bravo Martín (2008) calls the "actual relevance"), the Portuguese periphrasis always conveys a temporal meaning of posteriority.

³⁰ Though both Bravo Martín (2008) and Moreno Burgos (2014) agree in considering that the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive expresses the temporal location of the relevant situations at an interval following the ST in the context of future-oriented adverbials, they differ with respect to the status ascribed to this form in the process of grammaticalization. For Bravo Martín (2008: chapter 6, sections 4 and 5), even in the contexts described, the periphrasis is ambiguous between a (future) temporal and a (present) aspectual reading. This double interpretation could be understood as evidence that the process of grammaticalization of the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive has not yet reached its zenith and is still ongoing. She claims that there are some environments that favour the change of the structure at hand into a purely temporal operator, and others that confirm the maintenance of its interpretation as a

On the other hand, we can see that this temporal meaning of *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive fully corresponds to the interpretation that was given to the parallel structure in EP, as the comparison between the following examples illustrates:

- (66) Alfaro Moreno dijo lo siguiente: "Matías (Oyola) va a jugar el año que viene en Barcelona" y el tema Damían Díaz: "En los próximos días vamos a conversar con él". (example taken from <https://elcanaldelfutbol.com/noticias/alfaro-moreno-matias-oyola-va-a-jugar-el-ano-que-viene-en-bsc/>)
 «Alfaro Moreno say-PPerf.3.sg the following: “Matías (Oyola) go-Pres.3.sg to play-Inf the year that come-Pres.3.sg in Barcelona” and the subject Damían Díaz: “In the following days go-Pres.1.pl to talk-Inf with him”»
 «Alfaro Moreno said the following: “Matías (Oyola) will play next year in Barcelona” and, about Damían Díaz: “In the next few days we will talk with him.”»
- (67) O Benfica vai jogar no sábado, às 21h, no campo do Espinho, enquanto o Sporting adiou o seu encontro com o Gil Vicente para as 16h de domingo. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext563378-des-96b-1*)
 «The Benfica go-Pres.3.sg play-Inf in-the Saturday, at-the 21h, in-the field of-the Espinho, while the Sporting postpone-PPerf.3.sg the its match with the Gil Vicente to the 16h of Sunday»
 «Benfica will play on Saturday at 21h at Espinho’s stadium, while Sporting postponed their match against Gil Vicente to 16h on Sunday.»

Given all the observations we have just made, it becomes clear that it is important to provide a semantic characterisation that allows us to distinguish the SF from the periphrastic constructions, both in Spanish and in EP, but that, simultaneously, accounts for the differences we have observed between the two languages. In the next section, I will present some ways in which we could achieve a better understanding of this issue.

5. Some semantic properties of the Simple Future and the prospective periphrastic constructions in Spanish and in European Portuguese

With respect to the data I have discussed so far, let me summarise some of the most important properties that enable us to distinguish the tenses that constitute the subject of our study.

As we have seen in sections 2 and 3, the *Futuro Simple* in Spanish and the *Futuro Simples* in EP behave quite similarly. I have also agreed that the best treatment for these tenses in both languages involves a basic temporal meaning conveying a systematic future location of the situations with respect to the ST, following the ideas provided by Gennari (2000; 2002). Such basic future temporal information interacts dynamically with modal and aspectual factors, giving rise to the different interpretations that characterise the tense forms under consideration.

This kind of analysis is able to solve some of the puzzles posed by the behaviour of the SF, both in Spanish and in EP. In particular, it deals quite well with the following facts: (i) the existence of contexts in which the SF expresses a purely temporal meaning of posteriority, taking for granted the occurrence of future situations due to

prospective aspectual device. Moreno Burgos, for his part, maintains that the process of grammaticalization is already complete in this type of context, and that the only interpretation available is the purely temporal one.

the presence of adverbials or other expressions conveying a high degree of certainty; to the contribution of knowledge about naturally predictable and inevitable happenings; or to the location of the eventualities at a precise, well-defined future interval; (ii) the future-oriented nature of the large majority of the sentences in which the SF expresses modal meanings, validating a harmonious combination between modal and temporal information in this kind of configuration; (iii) the strong aspectual restrictions that arise in conjectural or hypothetical readings, in which only (basic or derived) statives, but not events, may receive a conjectural interpretation valid at the ST; and, finally, (iv) the possibility of locating states in the future, despite their unbounded nature.³¹

Securing an adequate treatment for the periphrastic constructions, however, faces more complex difficulties. On the one hand, as many authors have suggested, the Spanish structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive seems to be ambiguous between two disparate interpretations: an aspectual reading, somehow associated with the present domain, and a temporal one, unequivocally pointing to the future. On the other hand, we cannot establish a direct correspondence between the Portuguese and the Spanish configurations, since, as shown in section 4, there are clear interpretative differences that arise between them, namely the fact that the Portuguese structure always locates the relevant situations in an interval that obligatorily follows the ST.

Regarding the Spanish construction *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive, Bravo Martín (2008) proposes that its core meaning is an aspectual one, representing the notion of the Prospective Aspect.

Based on proposals made by Klein (1994), Bravo Martín suggests that the prospective meaning associated to the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive, in the absence of temporal adverbials, emerges as a consequence of its aspectual profile. According to Klein, Grammatical Aspect is obtained through a mechanism that relates the time of the whole situation denoted by the verb and its complements (Situation Time) with another interval, the so-called Topic Time, conceived as the moment in the timeline at which the assertion is valid and, for that very reason, the period of time that serves to delimit the part of the eventuality that is actually being referred to. That is to say, the Topic Time is used to highlight the portion of the situation that is really being stated.

Bravo Martín believes that the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive constitutes the realization of the Prospective Aspect in Spanish. She goes on to say that the relevant properties of the Prospective Aspect may be summarised as follows: (i) the Topic Time excludes the Situation Time and (ii) the Topic Time precedes the Situation Time. As a consequence of this characterisation, we can say that the Prospective Aspect inherently denotes a posteriority relation of the Situation Time, with respect to the Topic Time. The temporal location of the Topic Time is, in turn, given by the tense of the auxiliary verb *ir* ('go'), so that the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive in the present tense refers to an interval overlapping the ST in which the preliminary conditions for the arising of a subsequent situation are met.

This account makes the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive compatible with the Present Relevance hypothesis assumed by Bravo Martín to be one of the most relevant features of this particular construction. In effect, the posteriority of the main situation regarding the utterance time is not the result of its location in a future domain, but rather the natural consequence of the aspectual profile of the periphrasis, which

³¹ For more details, including extensive discussion and exemplification, see sections 2 and 3 in this paper.

expresses the current preliminary conditions leading to the emergence of that eventuality.

Therefore, the characterisation of the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive as an aspectual operator conveying the prospective aspect (i.e., locating at the utterance time the preparatory or the preliminary phase of a given situation that leads to its occurrence) explains the fact that this construction is particularly appropriate to convey interpretations such as those related to intentionality, imminence and inevitability, traditionally ascribed to its core meaning and constituting different manifestations of the current relevance.³²

Unfortunately, this treatment does not account for all the contexts in which *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive occurs. In particular, as we have seen in section 4, when a prospective temporal adverbial or any other equivalent expression combines with the periphrasis, only a purely temporal future reading is possible: in a sentence such as "El Sanse y el Hernani van a jugar el domingo en Zubieta, a las 11.30, su partido correspondiente a esta jornada."³³ ("Sanse and Hernani will play their match from this round on Sunday in Zubieta, at 11.30 am"), it is not tenable to assume that there is any kind of present relevance involved nor that we are describing some sort of preliminary stages leading to the described situation. The only available reading is a temporal one, in which the eventuality is placed at the relevant future interval.

These observations led authors such as Bravo Martín (2008) or Moreno Burgos (2014) to support the idea that the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive is ambiguous between an aspectual and a purely temporal reading, depending on the absence or presence of prospective temporal adverbials or equivalent linguistic devices corresponding to two independent semantic outlines.

Regarding the Portuguese counterpart of the periphrasis, *ir* ('go') + Infinitive, we have claimed, in the previous section, that it can only express a purely temporal meaning. In support of this view, we may invoke the fact that it never occurs in contexts in which the relevant situation overlaps the ST. In particular, it is ruled out in when-clauses placed in the present domain or in sentences asserting a simultaneous relationship between an eventuality and a deictic punctual adverbial referring to the utterance time.

Can it be said, therefore, that the SF and the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive mean exactly the same in EP? Of course, not. As I have already pointed out, only the *Futuro Simple* is acceptable in hypothetical or conjectural contexts in which the situation overlaps the ST; moreover, we observed that the Portuguese SF is much more suitable to convey modal connotations than the periphrastic construction.

To account for these differences, I will adopt here the proposal made by Cunha (2021) according to which the *Futuro Simple* merely locates a given situation at an interval following the ST, while the periphrasis requires an additional condition in that it imposes an initial temporal boundary, obligatorily located in the future domain, beyond which the eventuality cannot take place. This characterisation would

³² The idea that the structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive in Brazilian Portuguese has some kind of present relevance is discussed, e.g., by Silva (1997), who claims that it represents a kind of "ulterior present". However, as we have observed in section 4, there is no linguistic evidence supporting such a treatment for EP; on the contrary, the respective construction seems to consistently locate the situations in a future domain, blocking any present-oriented interpretations. Even in Brazilian Portuguese, there are strong arguments supporting the idea that the *ir* ('go') + Infinitive structure locates the relevant situations at a purely future interval, not displaying any kind of present relevance, as shown by Rodrigues (2011) for example.

³³ Example taken from CREA: "Rekarte reconhece que un derbi siempre es diferente": *El Diario Vasco*, 11/01/2001.

correspond to a tentative representation such as the following: $t0 < t1$ (the speech time $t0$ precedes a future interval $t1$) & $\text{beg}(Sit) \in t1$ (the beginning of the situation is part of $t1$, which functions as a barrier for the occurrence of (any part of) the situation at $t0$). This condition prevents the *ir* ('go') + Infinitive structure from overlapping with the ST, in particular when it is combined with statives, that typically surpass their location intervals, mirroring the terminative condition ascribed to the *Preterito Perfeito do Indicativo* (terminative simple past).

Thus, since the *Futuro Simples* reveals weaker temporal requirements, it can interact unproblematically and more easily with other semantic features, for instance related to lexical aspect or to modality.

Conversely, since its temporal profile is subject to stronger restrictions, the interplay of the construction *ir* ('go') + Infinitive with aspectual and modal elements becomes more constrained: since it imposes an initial future boundary that cannot be traversed, the interpretative alternation between events and states becomes irrelevant – even with statives, an overlapping reading with the utterance time is systematically rejected (cf. example (64), repeated here for convenience as (68)) –, and the ability to perform modal meanings is also quite limited (cf. (38), repeated here as (69)).

- (68) O edifício dos Correios vai medir 80 m.
 «The building of-the Post Office go-Pres.3.sg measure-Inf 80 m»
 «The Post Office building will/* may measure 80 m.»
- (69) As obras vão começar em breve e prevê-se que cheguem ao fim no próximo ano.
 «The works go-Pres.3.pl start-Inf in soon and predict-Pres.3.sg-it that come-Pres.Subj.3.pl at-the end in-the next year»
 «The works will/* may start shortly and are expected to end next year.»

Before closing this section, it is interesting to note that, albeit extremely rarely, the construction *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive has survived in EP, seemingly expressing the prospective aspect, as the following examples illustrate:

- (70) E quando se vai a pedir contas, descobre-se que cada um dos intervenientes percebeu uma coisa diferente. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext76891-clt-96a-1*)
 «And when *se*-Clitic go-Pres.3.sg to ask-Inf accounts, discover-Pres.3.sg-*se*-Clitic that each one of-the players understand-PPerf.3.sg a thing different»
 «And when you go to ask for explanations, you discover that each of the players has understood something different.»
- (71) Só que, a seguir, quando um dos outros vai a sacar da arma, agita no ar um espanador. (CetemPúblico, *par=ext588049-clt-92b-1*)
 «Only that, then, when one of-the others go-Pres.3.sg to draw-Inf of-the gun, wave-Pres.3.sg in-the air a duster»
 «But then, when one of the others goes for his gun, he waves a feather duster in the air.»

In a sentence like (71), for instance, the waving of the duster is simultaneous with a period of time in which the preliminary phase of drawing the gun is happening. This phase, a pre-preparatory state (cf. Moens, 1987; Binnick, 1991; Klein, 1994; Cunha, 2004/2007), though pertaining to the whole aspectual profile of the situation, precedes – but does not include – the drawing-of-the-gun event itself.

The distinction between the temporal structure *ir* ('go') + Infinitive and the aspectual construction *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive in EP becomes clearer if we consider the corresponding verbal forms in the Imperfect tense. Observe the following contrasting pair of sentences:

- (72) O Ministro das Finanças ia discursar no Parlamento Europeu, mas perdeu o avião para Estrasburgo.
 «The Minister of-the Finances go-*Imp*.3.sg talk-*Inf* in-the Parliament European, but miss-*PPerf*.3.sg the plane to Strasbourg.
 «The Finance Minister was going to address the European Parliament, but he missed the plane to Strasbourg.»
- (73) * O Ministro das Finanças ia a discursar no Parlamento Europeu, mas perdeu o avião para Estrasburgo.
 «The Minister of-the Finances go-*Imp*.3.sg to talk-*Inf* in-the Parliament European, but miss-*PPerf*.3.sg the plane to Strasbourg»
 «The Finance Minister was about to address the European Parliament, but he missed the plane to Strasbourg.»

Since, in EP, *ir* ('go') + Infinitive locates a situation in a future interval (in this case with respect to a past reference time), a sentence such as (72) is unproblematic, provided that a modal contrafactual reading is associated with it, i.e., a reading in which we assume that the Finance Minister did not address the European Parliament.

However, why is (73) ruled out? If we accept that *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive, in EP, expresses not a temporal prospective relationship but the occurrence of a preparatory or a preliminary phase in the aspectual profile of the relevant situation, the answer to this question becomes straightforward: given our knowledge of the world, the missing of the plane to Strasbourg is not compatible with a plausible interval in which the preliminary phase for the event of addressing the European Parliament is going on. Yet, if we modify the above example providing a different situation that may be consistent with a preparatory phase for the event in question, the sentence with *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive turns out to be perfectly acceptable, as shown in (74):

- (74) O Ministro das Finanças ia a discursar no Parlamento Europeu, mas sofreu um desmaio súbito.
 «The Minister of-the Finances go-*Imp*.3.sg to talk-*Inf* in the Parliament European, but suffer-*PPerf*.3.sg a faint sudden»
 «The Finance Minister was about to address the European Parliament, but he had a sudden fainting spell.»

In (74), unlike (73), the sudden fainting spell is perfectly compatible with the development of some kind of preparation leading to the event of addressing the European Parliament – i.e., the fainting may be simultaneous with the walking to the stage or the testing of the sound equipment etc. – that may qualify as a preliminary phase for the event under discussion.

In this way, if we consider that the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive in EP expresses, in the relevant contexts³⁴, the preparatory phase of an eventuality, we arrive at a good explanation for the differences in acceptability observed between examples such as

³⁴ Actually, there are contexts in which *ir* (even associated with *a* + Infinitive) retains its lexical properties, behaving as a verb of motion. We will ignore these configurations here, since they require a completely different treatment that goes far beyond the scope of this paper.

(73) and (74), as only the latter can appropriately accommodate a preliminary phase for the relevant event.

Another argument supporting our hypothesis is related to the temporal patterns exhibited by when-clauses. As mentioned in section 4, Bravo Martín (2008) assumes that the co-occurrence of the Spanish structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive with a main sentence in the present tense in these environments constitutes a strong argument to consider that a (prospective) aspectual reading is available, since the two clauses pertain to the same temporal domain³⁵ (cf. (55), repeated here as (76)).

- (75) Pedro se levanta cuando Ariel se va a marchar al trabajo. (Bravo Martín, 2008: 182, ex. (39a))
 «Pedro himself get-up-Pres.3.sg when Ariel himself go-Pres.3.sg to walk-Inf to-the work»
 «Pedro gets up when Ariel is leaving for work.»

As I pointed out, a similar interpretation is not possible with the *ir* ('go') + Infinitive structure in EP, which gives rise to a semantic anomaly. Example (57), repeated here as (76) for convenience, illustrates this point:

- (76) * O Pedro levanta-se quando a Maria vai sair para o trabalho.
 «The Pedro get-up-Pres.3.sg-himself when the Maria go-Pres.3.sg leave-Inf to the work»
 «Pedro gets up when Maria is leaving for work.»

However, if *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive is used instead, the result becomes perfectly acceptable, as shown in (77):

- (77) O Pedro levanta-se quando a Maria vai a sair para o trabalho.
 «The Pedro get-up-Pres.3.sg-himself when the Maria go-Pres.3.sg to leave-Inf to the work»
 «Pedro gets up when Maria is leaving/is about to leave for work.»

Given that, in (77), the two clauses exhibit the Present tense – and, therefore, pertain to the same temporal domain –, we may conclude, following the arguments put forward by Bravo Martín (2008), that the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive in EP can effectively express a preliminary phase of the situation described in the subordinate clause that is co-temporal with the eventuality represented in the superordinate one.

In summary: while, in Spanish, the structure *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive is ambiguous between an aspectual and a temporal reading, in EP there are two independent (though intimately correlated) constructions each of which performing only one of these meanings.

Though it is not my intention to discuss the semantic properties of the corresponding English structure “be going to” + Infinitive, it is interesting to note that it seems to occupy a position somewhere in-between the Spanish and the Portuguese periphrases. As shown by Hopper & Traugott (2003), the grammaticalization of this construction begins with the directional motion meaning, traditionally associated with

³⁵ For a definition and an enlarged discussion about the notion of temporal domains, see Declerck (1991; 2006).

the lexical verb “to go”; then it evolves into a purposive meaning, which continues to constrain the use of the auxiliary, since it conveys the future of intention, plan, or schedule. In this stage, “be going to” displays an aspectual meaning of present relevance, much like its Spanish counterpart. However, the process of grammaticalization is still taking place, and the reduced form “gonna” acquires a purely temporal value, like the Portuguese *ir* + Infinitive form. As Hopper & Traugott point out, different stages of the evolution of the structure “be going to” coexist in present-day English, presenting some problems regarding the best description to adopt for the periphrasis.

Consequently, while authors such as Brisard (2001) and Wada (2009) assume that a present perspective is part of the core semantics of the “be going to” construction, treating this structure as pertaining to the present domain, much like the Spanish *ir* (‘go’) *a* + Infinitive, other linguists, such as Haegeman (1989) or Nicolle (1998), assume that the periphrasis is a true future tense, with the present relevance effects being a consequence of associated pragmatic inferences.³⁶

In any case, the grammaticalization process seems to promote the conversion of an aspectual operator conveying a prospective meaning into a true future tense; this evolution seems to be occurring even in Spanish, where true future readings have already been recognised.

6. Concluding remarks

In this paper I aimed to compare two different means of expressing futurity in Spanish and in EP, namely the *Futuro Simple/Futuro Simples* (Simple Future, SF) and the structure *ir* (‘go’) (*a*) in the Present tense + Infinitive.

Regarding the SF, we observed that it behaves quite similarly in both languages. Although there are many alternative approaches to account for the semantic properties that characterise this tense form, I have decided on a treatment that ascribes a central role to the temporal information of posteriority and that describes the varying behaviour of this tense as a consequence of a dynamic interaction between temporal, aspectual and modal information, as suggested by Gennari (2000; 2002).

This proposal allows us to accommodate some challenging features typically said to describe the SF in both Spanish and EP, in particular their pure temporal readings, their future-oriented modal interpretations and the aspectual restrictions imposed by the so-called conjectural or hypothetical environments.

Conversely, the use and meaning of the periphrastic structure differs considerably in the two languages under analysis. While, in Spanish, according to Bravo Martín (2008) and to Moreno Burgos (2014), the construction *ir* (‘go’) *a* + Infinitive is primarily devoted to conveying an aspectual meaning (in terms of the preliminary phase of the relevant eventuality), giving rise to pure temporal interpretations only if other linguistic clues pointing to the future are implicitly or explicitly represented in the context, its Portuguese counterpart, *ir* (‘go’) + Infinitive, consistently expresses a temporal meaning of posteriority and does not carry any kind of aspectual or other additional information.

Even though both the periphrastic and the morphological future, in EP, locate a situation in an upcoming domain, their semantic profile is not exactly the same: the SF merely locates the relevant situation in an interval following the ST, leaving the way open for the interference of modal and aspectual factors; *ir* (‘go’) + Infinitive, on

³⁶ The comparison of the Portuguese and Spanish periphrases with the corresponding English “be going to” construction, as well as other similar structures, like the French *aller* + Infinitive, is far beyond the scope of this article. I must leave the topic for future research.

the other hand, seems to impose additional temporal restrictions, in particular the presence of an initial boundary beyond which the eventuality cannot take place. This specification has direct consequences on the final readings of the whole sentences in which the periphrasis appears, strongly inhibiting interpretations other than the temporal ones.

Finally, we observed that, albeit in only extremely limited contexts, EP preserves a periphrastic structure – *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive – that seems to convey the preparatory or preliminary phase of the described situation. So, while the Spanish periphrasis *ir* ('go') *a* + Infinitive is clearly ambiguous between an aspectual and a temporal meaning, EP offers two different (though approximate) constructions, each of which presenting its own independent value.

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