On documenting language change as it happens: the periphrastic construction "motion verb + a + infinitive" in Italian

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Abstract

This study examines the grammaticalization of motion verbs in Italian within the periphrastic construction "motion verb + *a* + infinitive". Verbs such as *andare* 'to go', *venire* 'to come' and *tornare* 'to return' develop functional uses and express aspectual meanings, such as culminative, inchoative-imminential and iterative. The research employs corpus analysis to investigate the distribution of these constructions across formal and informal varieties of Italian. Analysis of both spoken (KIParla) and written (CORIS) corpora indicates diaphasic and diamesic variation. Formal written varieties exhibit higher percentages of aspectual values, while spontaneous speech shows lower percentages. Additionally, the corpus investigation reveals differences in the frequency of aspectual values, with the inchoative-imminential value being more prevalent in spoken language compared to written texts.

Keywords: motion verbs periphrases, grammaticalization, Italian, diaphasic variation, corpora.

1. Introduction

Over the course of the past centuries linguistic studies investigated how grammatical forms evolve from lexical items. Meillet (1912) called this phenomenon

grammaticalization. Starting from the 1970s, this research topic gained new traction, mostly due to Givón (1971, 1979).[1] Nowadays there are different approaches to grammaticalization (see Narrog & Heine 2011), but Heine & Kuteva (2002: 1) give a broad working definition of grammaticalization: "grammaticalization is defined as the development from lexical to grammatical forms and from grammatical to even more grammatical forms". This development is claimed to be gradual, and thus this process has also been described as a path of overlapping stages. At the beginning, the form develops a new interpretation due to inferential mechanisms, and the new interpretation becomes more plausible, compared to the old one, within the context this form is found (Heine 2002). The development of grammatical functions has been linked to processes such as the loss of morphosyntactic properties (*decategorialization*) and/or phonetic material (*erosion*) of the source form, the loss of semantic meaning (*desemanticization*), and the consequent use in new contexts (*extension*), as well as the increase in cohesion (*bondedness* and *paradigmaticity*) (Lehmann 1982, Heine 2003). Some approaches tend to discuss grammaticalization in terms of loss: grammaticalized forms become dependent and obligatory in certain syntagmatic context, and thus linguists focus their attention on the loss of phonetic and semantic substance. Another line of research, however, emphasizes the gains (or extension of context), highlighting the pragmatic enrichment and acquisition of polysemy and polyfunctionality that affect the forms undergoing grammaticalization (see Traugott 2010, Traugott & Trousdale 2013: 96-112).

Although motion verbs in grammaticalization processes have been extensively studied, there still remain uncertainties regarding the specific paths they undergo.[2] Previous studies have examined the use of motion verb periphrases (MVPs) in Italian across different historical periods, demonstrating that while these constructions were documented, they were not widely prevalent. However, a significant increase of use of MVPs has been observed in contemporary Italian (Renzi 2012, Strik Lievers 2017, Frosini 2020). This evolving situation gives us the perfect opportunity to document language change as it happens: corpora of spoken and written Italian give us the means to take a snapshot of the current situation. The findings indicate that MVPs are moving at different speed, but some of them are also undergoing significant changes. Specifically, data from the KIParla corpus reveal a substantially higher frequency of the inchoative-imminential reading with *andare* MVPs than previously reported.

This paper is organized the following way: Section 2 will offer a description of some Romance and Italian motion verb constructions, and then the focus will shift on Italian MVPs: we will delve into the aspectual and modal meanings attributed to these periphrases, assess the degree of periphrasticity, explore their origins, and report in which varieties of Italian MVPs are utilized. In Section 3, we will present the results obtained from querying for *andare/venire/tornare* + *a* + infinitive in two Italian corpora. Our objective is to map the distribution of MVPs in contemporary Italian and to test hypotheses put forth in the literature. To achieve this, we selected two corpora of contemporary Italian, one comprising spoken language (KIParla) and the other written texts (CORIS). These corpora are divided into subcorpora that cover a wide range of situations across the diaphasic spectrum. In our discussion of the results, we

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[1]   For more in-depth information on the history of grammaticalization see Lehmann (1982), Heine *et al*. (1991), Hopper & Traugott (2003), Lindström (2004).

[2]   See for example the still ongoing debate around the grammaticalization of Catalan *go-past* (cf. Detges 2004, Nagy 2010, Cruschina & Kocher 2022).

will examine the uneven distribution of MVPs in written and spoken productions, as well as the attestation of their aspectual values.

2. Motion verbs periphrases in Romance languages

The grammaticalization process often involves motion verbs, as they fit well with the *auxiliation constraint* proposed in Heine (1993: 85) and Kuteva (1995). Each grammatical category has a limited set of potential source expressions, as they must be the most direct encodings of certain basic conceptual structures to qualify (Kuteva 1995: 379). This elucidates why verbs such as GO and COME are prime candidates for grammaticalization changes. Romance languages offer various instances of motion verbs constructions evolving in auxiliaries: as example, we will provide evidence of cases from French, Spanish, Catalan where motion verbs are followed by an infinitive.

In French, as depicted in Bres & Labeau (2013a, 2013b, 2018), *aller* and *venir* are found within various periphrastic construction with aspectual, modal and temporal meanings. Most notoriously, *aller* + infinitive can convey temporal readings such as the future (1).

(1)   French, Bres & Labeau (2013a: 19)
        Elle *va   le   quitter*
        she go.PRS.3SG him leave.INF
        'She will leave him.'

When employed in narrative texts, it can perform as a metanarrative tool, as it aids the organization of the narration. A rare development from this use is the narrative value, as *aller* + infinitive no longer hold future value and is understood as fully completed (2).

(2)   French, Bres & Labeau (2018: 65)
        À   partir de la fin du   XIXe siècle,   le   nombre […]
        from   start of the end of.the 19th century, the   number […]
        va   progresser
        go.PRS.3SG progress.INF
        'From the end of the 19th century, the number […] increases.'

Other than *venir de* + infinitive with retrospective value, *venir* can appear in a less frequent construction (3) that express the result (*aboutissement*). *Aller/venir* + infinitive can also convey modal meanings, such as mirativity[3] (4)–(5), as the speaker expresses astonishment, regret, or scandal when something disrupts the expected order.

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[3]   In Bres & Labeau (2013a, 2018) this modal value is called *extraordinaire*. As done in other works (e.g. Celle & Lansari 2015), I will translate it as mirative. The same approach will be taken for the modal value expressed by Spanish *ir*, that is identified as the "expression of extraordinary" in Garachana's (2018) work. A more detailed account of the mirative value will be given in Section 2.4.

(3)   French, Bres & Labeau (2018: 72)
       Peu à peu le   feu *vient   à embraser*   toute la   maison
       bit to bit the fire come.PRS.3SG to engulf.INF all   the house
       'Gradually the fire engulfs the whole house.'

(4)   French, Bres & Labeau (2018: 74)
       Je sais pas comment *je suis   allée   penser*   à cette histoire
       I know not how   I be.PRS.1SG go.PST.PTCP think.INF to this   story
       'I don't know how I came to think of this story.'

(5)   French, Bres & Labeau (2018: 74)
       Mais tu te   rends compte? *Venir   me dire*   ça à moi?
       but   you at.you make account? come.INF me tell.INF this to me?
       'But do you realize? Come and tell me that?'

As for Spanish motion verb periphrases, Garachana (2018: 116) counts 19 main verbal periphrases derived from motion verbs. Among these, *ir a* + infinitive has developed prospective (6) and terminative/culminative (7) values, and it can also produce modal periphrasis that expresses mirativity (8). The terminative/culminative value can also be expressed by *venir a* + infinitive (9).

(6)   Spanish, Garachana (2018: 123)
       El tren con destino   Blanes *va   a efectuar*   su salida
       the train with destination Blanes go.PRS.3SG to effectuate.INF its exit
       'The train to Blanes will depart.'

(7)   Spanish, Garachana (2018: 119)
       Al final, *fuimos   a parar* a un   restaurante de mala muerte
       at end, go.PST.1PL   to stop.INF in a   restaurant of bad death
       'We finally ended up in a dodgy restaurant.'

(8)   Spanish, Garachana (2018: 120)
       Y   me lo *vas   a decir* justo ahora
       and me it go.PRS.2SG to tell.INF right now
       'And you tell me this now.'

(9)   Spanish, Garachana (2018: 136)
       La noticia del   enfriamiento antártico *viene   a complicar*
       the news of.the cooling   Antarctic come.PRS.3SG   to complicate.INF
       el entendimiento del   cambio climático en curso.
       the understanding of.the change climate   in progress
       'The news of Antarctic cooling somewhat complicates our understanding of current climate change.'

In Catalan, GO developed in a way that diverges from the previously presented cases: it is utilized as a past tense marker (10). Its grammaticalization path prompts numerous inquiries and varying explanations regarding its origin. Detges (2004) use the Catalan *go*-past to question the auxiliation constrains as he relates the origins of

this form to narrative contexts, where a discourse technique gives rise to the inference of a complete action that later conventionalized as a past tense. In Cruschina & Kocher (2022), instead, the past temporal value arises from the mirative modal implicature that expresses a movement away from the speakers' expectations or beliefs.

(10)   Catalan, Detges (2004: 214)
        El   seu discurs *va*   *causar*   un gran impacte en l'   auditori
        the his talk   go:3SG.PRES produce:INF a   great effect   on the audience
        'His talk produced a great effect on the audience.'

2.1. Motion verbs periphrases in Italian

As we have observed, motion verbs often partake in grammaticalization in Romance languages. In Italian, motion verbs can also appear in constructions where they convey aspectual values, having lost their motion meaning. Considering only *andare* 'to go', *venire* 'to come' and *tornare* 'to return', we encounter various instances: *andare/venire* + gerundive, *andare/venire* + past participle and *andare/venire/tornare* + *a* + infinitive, the topic of this paper (Bertinetto 1991, Squartini 1998, Giacalone Ramat 2000).
        In Italian *andare* and *venire* can act as passive auxiliaries when followed by a past participle (11) (12).

(11)   Italian, Sansò & Giacalone Ramat (2016: 5)
        La casa *andò*   *distrutta*   negli   anni   settanta
        ART house go.PFV.PST.3SG   destroy.PST.PTCP   in.ART years seventies
        'The house got destroyed in the Seventies.'

(12)   Italian, Sansò & Giacalone Ramat (2016: 1)
        I   due *vennero*   *trascinati*   via
        ART.M.PL two come.PFV.PST.3PL   drag:PST.PTCP.M.PL   away
        'The two were dragged off.'

Andare + past participle can convey a deontic passive (13) or a "true" passive reading (11), that is however linked to the expression of the negative value of destruction and loss. It has been noted it also carries an accidental reading of the event (Mocciaro 2014: 46).

(13)   Italian, Mocciaro (2014: 46)
        I   documenti *vanno*   *distrutti*
        ART   documents go.PRS.3PL destroy.PST.PTCP.PL
        'The documents should be destroyed.'

Sansò & Giacalone Ramat (2016) argue that these two constructions developed independently: *andare* had an atelic semi-copula meaning 'to persist in a given state' that then developed in a deontic passive, while, to evolve in a "true" passive, the process took off from the use of *andare* as a telic change-of-state semi-copula.
        A similar development from the change-of-state meaning applies to *venire* + past particle, that, as seen also in the emergence of *become*-passives in German and

other languages, develops into a passive auxiliary due to the inherently passive orientation of the past participle (Giacalone Ramat & Sansò 2014: 41). *Venire* + past participle, keeping traces of *venire* meaning, usually denotes a more dynamic passive (15), contrasting *essere*-passive, which usually conveys a more stative passive (14) (Giacalone Ramat & Sansò 2014: 33).

(14)   Italian, Giacalone Ramat (2000: 137)
         La porta *era   chiusa*
         the door be.IMPF.3SG close.PST.PTCP
         'The door was closed.'

(15)   Italian, Giacalone Ramat (2000: 137)
         La porta *veniva   chiusa*   ogni sera […] dal   guardiano
         the door come.IMPF.3SG close.PST.PTCP   every night   by.the watchman
         'The door was closed every evening at seven by the watchman.'

Andare and *venire* can also appear in a less frequent periphrastic construction (Squartini 1998: 87), in which the motion verb is followed by the gerundive form of the main verb (16) (17). This construction conveys the progression of the event over a period of time, without actually achieving the goal suggested by the verb (Bertinetto 1997: 126).

(16)   Italian, Giacalone Ramat (2000: 126)
         Lo *vado   dicendo* da   un   pezzo
         it go.PRS.1SG say.GER from a   while
         'I've been saying it for a while.'

(17)   Italian, Giacalone Ramat (2000: 126)
         Veniva   ripetendo a tutti la   stessa storia
         come.IMPF.3SG   repeat.GER to all   the   same story
         'He continued telling everybody the same story.'

Even if in certain contexts this periphrastic construction is interchangeable with the progressive periphrasis (18), it is the preferred periphrastic construction when we want to stress the durative aspect (19) (Bertinetto 1991: 146).

(18)   a. Italian, Bertinetto (1991: 146)
         Filippo *andava   assomigliando* sempre di più   a suo zio
         Filippo go.IMPF.3SG   look.GER   always of more   to his uncle
         b. Italian, Bertinetto (1991: 146)
         Filippo *stava   assomigliando* sempre di più   a suo zio
         Filippo stay.IMPF.3SG look.GER   always of more   to his uncle
         'Filippo was more and more like his uncle.'

(19)   a. Italian, Bertinetto (1991: 146)
           Per tutta la   durata della   riunione, Gino *andava*   *chiedendo*
           For all   the time of.the meeting, Gino go.IMPF.3SG   ask.GER
           ad Alfredo spiegazioni
           to Alfredo explanations
        b. Italian, Bertinetto (1991: 146)
           *Per tutta la   durata della   riunione, Gino *stava*   *chiedendo*
            for all   the time of.the meeting, Gino stay.IMPF.3SG   ask.GER
           ad Alfredo spiegazioni
           to Alfredo explanations
           'Throughout the meeting, Gino was asking Alfredo for explanations.'

Giacalone Ramat (1995, 2000) claims that this periphrastic construction is a case of interrupted grammaticalization, as records of Italian show *andare* and *venire* used with a larger variety of verbs, while nowadays its use in Standard Italian is declining, and it is mainly found with incrementative verbs (*aumentare* 'to increase', *peggiorare* 'to make worse') and verbs of communication such as *dire* 'to say' and *ripetere* 'to repeat' (Giacalone Ramat 2000: 144). This has been taken to suggest that this construction is entering the lexicon as an idiomatized expression (Giacalone Ramat 1995, 2000).

2.2. Motion verbs periphrases with *andare/venire/tornare a* + infinitive in Italian

Motion verbs in Italian can be followed by a purpose infinitive, as illustrated in the following examples (20), (21) and (22):

(20)   Italian, CORIS[4]
        All'   ora   di pranzo io *vado*   *a* comprare i   calamari
        at.the hour of lunch I go.PRS.1SG to buy.INF the   squid
        'At lunchtime I go to buy squid.'

(21)   Italian, CORIS
        La   cameriera *è*   *venuta*   *a* portare   il   cibo
        the waitress   be.PRS.3SG come.PST.PTCP   to bring.INF   the food
        'The waitress came to bring the food.'

(22)   Italian, KIParla
        Torni   *a* riprendere   suo figlio tra due ore
        return.IMP.3SG   to pick.up.INF his son   in two hours
        'Come back to pick up your son in two hours.'

In these sentences, the subjects move through space in order to accomplish a task; in (20) the speaker goes somewhere to buy lunch, in (21) the waitress moves through the restaurant in order to bring food to the customers, while in (22) a parent is told to come back to pick up their son in two hours. Thus, there is spatial displacement in order to fulfil an objective. However, in the examples (23), (24), (25), where the

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4   More information on CORIS and KIParla corpora will be given in Section 3.1.

motion verbs are grammaticalized, there is no longer physical movement through space.

(23)   Italian, KIParla
       Vado   a ridurre   la quantità di alimento perché la scrofa […]
       go.PRS.1SG to reduce.INF the amount of food   because the sow
       è   più   affaticata
       is   more   fatigued
       'I'm going to reduce the amount of food because the sow is more fatigued.'

(24)   Italian, KIParla
       Se anche solamente cinque studenti svolgono in modo errato il   test,
       if even only   five   students perform in way   wrong the test,
       si   *viene*   *a parlare* già   del   venticinque percento
       IMPRS come.PRS.3SG to talk.INF already   about.the twenty-five percent
       'If five students only perform incorrectly on the test, we come to talk about twenty-five percent already.'

(25)   Italian, CORIS
       Federalberghi *torna*   *a esprimere* la propria preoccupazione
       Federalberghi return.PRS.3SG to express.INF the its   concern
       'Federalberghi returns to express its concern.'

       In (23), despite the subject being animate and in control of their action, no observable movement occurs. Instead, the intention of the speaker to modify the food consumption of the animal is conveyed. In (24), there is no animate agentive subject capable of movement through space to achieve a goal, but the focus is put on the result of an event. Similarly, in (25), the action is repeated, but there is no implication of movement through space. The aspectual values displayed, inchoative, culminative and iterative, will be discussed in greater details later.
       In this work I will deal with *andare*, *venire* and *tornare* followed by an infinitive. Previous works have mainly focused on *andare*, and few have been made on *venire*. *Tornare* has been studied separately for, as we will see later, it has a different aspectual meaning. However, as some studies group them together, I chose to explore their distribution across the varieties of Italian and investigate the extent of their grammaticalization to see if a deeper understanding could be attained.
       Earlier works have discussed the status of MVPs as a periphrastic construction: Valentini (2007: 218) describes it as a categorial periphrasis in Haspelmath's (2000) terms, because MVP presents semantic non-compositionality, restriction on the auxiliary element and a meaning that is not expressed in monolectic form elsewhere in Italian, even though it does not fill a gap defined by a system of monolectic forms. Moreover, this periphrastic construction fulfils the main requirements listed in Bertinetto (1990) for testing if we are dealing with a periphrasis: it displays semantic integration, as its meaning is not the sum of its component; it is composed by an auxiliary (*andare*, *venire*, *tornare*) and a main verb that is in a non-finite form (infinitive); and the auxiliary is part of limited list, as shown in Dietrich (1973: 9). Drawing from previous works on the topic (Amenta & Strudsholm 2002, Valentini 2007, Levie 2015, 2017, Strik Lievers 2017), we will summarize the tests implemented

to evaluate the degree of periphrasticity of MVPs. These works delved mainly into *andare*, but these considerations remain valid also for *venire* and *tornare*.

Table 1. Parameters used to test the level of periphrasticity of MVPs

Clitic climbing	Ve lo *vado* *a mostrare* you it go.PRS.1SG to show.INF *Vado* *a mostrar* -ve -lo go.PRS.1SG to show.INF -you-it 'I am going to show it to you'
Negation scope	{Non} *vado* *a* {*non} *mostrar* -vi questo dipinto {not } go.PRS.1SG to {*not} show.INF -you this picture 'I am going to show to you this
Interposition of lexical material	*Vado* fra poco *a mostrar* -vi questo dipinto go.PRS.1SG among little to show.INF -you this picture 'I am going to show to you this picture in a little bit'
Restriction on tense and mood	Il dibattito si *andò* *a sviluppare* the debate IMPRS go.PST.3SG to evolve.INF 'The debate ended up evolving/? started to evolve'
Extension of use	*Vado ad andare go.PRS.1SG to go.INF 'I am going to go'
Non-agentive and inanimate subjects acceptable	La situazione *va* *a peggiorare* the situation go.PRS.3SG to worsen.INF 'the situation ends up worsening/?is going to worsen'

As we can observe, these parameters are both syntactic and semantic. The periphrasis presents syntactic cohesion: clitic climbing is possible, and the scope of the negation extends to the whole construct, and furthermore, only the insertion of adjuncts, such as adverbs and connectives, is permitted. Apparently there are no restrictions with the culminative and iterative values, while the inchoative value is only possible with the present, future and imperfect. With regard to the evaluation of the desemanticization of the motion verb, while inanimate, non-agentive subjects are allowed, it is still deemed not acceptable for these motion verbs to be followed by another motion verb, even if some occurrences of *andare* followed by *andare* were found on the web (Levie 2017). However, as Strik Lievers (2017: 171) has already pointed out, clitic climbing and the scope of negation are not optimal tests for evaluating if a reanalysis has occurred, as they are possible when the motion verbs have their literal meaning followed by a purpose clause (26), as *andare* and *venire* are restructuring verbs in Italian (Rizzi 1976, 1978, Cardinaletti & Shlonsky 2004, Cinque 2006).

(26)   Italian
        Non lo *vado*   *a comprare* lì
        not it go.PRS.1SG   to buy.INF   there
        'I don't go there to buy it.'

As discussed in previous works (Amenta & Strudsholm 2002, Valentini 2007, Levie 2015, 2017, Strik Lievers 2017), the results show that grammaticalization has occurred: the motion verbs underwent loss of lexical meaning (desemanticization), but, at the same time, new contexts of use are available (extension). Moreover, a

reanalysis process can be assumed to have taken place, which suggests decategorialization happened: thus, from a biclausal sentence with a motion verb followed by a purpose clause the structure has become a monoclausal sentence: [VP motion verb [CP a [VP infinitive]]] > [FP motion verb [FP a [VP infinitive]]].

2.3. Aspectual values

In the literature, many labels have been used to describe the aspectual values conveyed by these periphrases. Even if they often offer different nuances, we can attempt to summarize them in some main branches. Each paragraph will discuss the research behind each aspectual value for Italian MVPs and will provide some information about their historical attestation.

2.3.1. Iterative aspect
MVPs with *tornare* can express the iterative value, further divided in restitutive, the restoration of a previous state of affairs, and repetitive, that is the repetition of a previous event (Rosemeyer 2016, Strik Lievers 2017). Rosemeyer (2016: 240-243) outlines a grammaticalization path that begins with a 'change of location' meaning: going back to a previous location means in a sense restoring a previous state. This inference leads to a more abstract form of restitution, that gives rise to the restitutive meaning (27).

(27)   Italian, Strik Lievers (2017: 187)
        Il   culto del   santo subì   un arresto […], per poi *tornare*
        the cult of.the saint suffered a   standstill,   for then return.INF
        a manifestar -si   nel   secolo   successivo
        to manifest.INF -IMPRS in.the century following
        'The cult of the saint came to a standstill [...], only to return in the following century.'

        Rosemeyer (2016) argues that the repetitive meaning (28) arises from this latter reading, suggesting that if a subject referent returns to an earlier state, it is likely that they have undergone the same process twice, only in opposing directionality.

(28)   Italian, Strik Lievers (2017: 187)
        Nel   maggio 2000, *è*   *tornata*   *a svolgere*
        in.the May   2000, be.PRS.3SG come.PST.PTCP to perform.INF
        il   ruolo di imprenditore
        the   role of entrepreneur
        'In May 2000, she returned to the role of entrepreneur.'

        In Giacalone Ramat's (2001) analysis of a corpus of spoken Italian, this periphrasis appeared predominantly with verbs of saying, perception, and mental activity. Strik Lievers (2017), on the other hand, points out that restitutive and repetitive values are usually associated with verbs of different actional classes: restitutive periphrasis is needed with durative verbs (mainly state and activity verbs), while the repetitive is elicited by non-durative verbs (Strik Lievers 2017: 187). Strik Lievers's (2017) data also confirm Rosemeyer's (2016) observation that in Italian the

restitutive use of periphrases prevails over the repetitive: in her research, she found that 79% of occurrences have restitutive value and only 8% repetitive. According to Rosemeyer (2016: 266-268), the scarcity of attestations in Italian of *tornare* MVPs with repetitive value is due to the vitality of the prefix *ri-*, which competes with the periphrastic construction in the expression of repetition. Strik Lievers (2017: 188) notes that in the presence of repetitive *tornare* it is not uncommon for the main verb to be prefixed with *ri-*, as shown in (29).

(29)   Italian, Strik Lievers (2017: 188)
        Era […] figlio di una famiglia di fornai […], attività che Amadei
        was   son of a   family   of bakers,   activity that Amadei
        tornò   a   riprendere
        return.PST.3SG   to resume.INF
        'He was the son of a family of bakers, an activity that Amadei returned to.'

The first attestations of the periphrasis in the MIDIA[5] corpus date back to the 1200-1375 period and in the last period, from 19th to the first half of the 20th century, functional use of *tornare* climbs up to 74% (Strik Lievers 2017). The productivity of this MVP in Italian is lower than Spanish and Catalan (Rosemeyer 2016), and this has led some researchers to describe it as an emergent periphrasis (Giacalone Ramat 2001). However, apparently *tornare* shows a higher preference for functional use than *andare* or *venire* (cfr. *infra*). As Parry's (2022) research shows, functional *tornare* is attested in a large number of Italo-romance languages, where it displays a good level of grammaticalization, as it is found with animate and inanimate subjects and the alternation of *be-* or *have*-auxiliaries is attested, probably connected to a semantic difference. Notice that this functional use of *tornare* is also found in pseudo-coordinative constructions typical of Southern varieties: in the example (30), that comes from Catania, Sicily, *tornu* has the aspectual value of 'again'.

(30)   Sicilian, Di Caro & Giusti (2015: 403)
        Ti   lu   *tornu*   a   *scrivu.*
        to-you.CL   it.CL   come.back.1SG   a   write.1SG
        'I write it to you again.'

2.3.2. Culminative aspect
The second value has been described as *risolutivo* (lit. 'resolutive'), as it indicates the achievement of a specific result at the end of a process (Bertinetto 1991: 160-161), or as *culminative*, for which the culmination is "a non-intended outcome […] preceded by a preparatory process, which is encoded by the verb of motion" (Veland 2014: 157). There are indeed different nuances: in the culminative definition it is highlighted that the subject is not agentive and the process happens without its input, often despite the intention of the subject (Strik Lievers 2017: 178). Levie (2015) points out that the preparatory process can be in the range of the sentence, or in a larger bout of texts, at the end of which there is the culmination of the process, expressed with MVPs.

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[5]   MIDIA (*Morfologia dell'Italiano in DIAcronia*) corpus is a diachronic corpus of Italian which includes literary works (poetry, prose and theatre works) as well as legal and scientific documents, personal writings and expository texts (D'Achille *et al.* 2017). Texts are grouped in five time periods: 1200-1375, 1376-1532, 1533-1691, 1692-1840, and 1841-1947.

Valentini (2007: 230) suggests that achievement[6] verbs mainly trigger culminative reading, but this value is also found with accomplishment and state verbs. Bertinetto (1991: 160-161) registers only *andare* and *venire* as possible motion verbs in this periphrasis, but Strik Lievers (2017: 190) proposes to include more verbs, such as *arrivare* and *giungere* 'to arrive'. However, for the scope of this paper, we will only look into culminative *andare* (31) and *venire* (32).

(31)   Italian, KIParla
        Perché questo *va*   *a influenzare* la   produttività
        because this   go.PRS.3SG to affect.INF   the   productivity
        'Because this ends up affecting the productivity.'

(32)   Italian, CORIS
        Così facendo la   tutela   stessa *viene*   *a mancare*
        so   doing   the protection itself   come.PRS.3SG to lack.INF
        'In doing so, the protection itself ends up coming to an end.'

Strik Lievers (2017: 181) reports that the first occurrences of cumulative *andare* in the MIDIA corpus trace back to 14th and 15th century period, and its occurrences increased during the centuries (up to 22% of total occurrences of *andare a* + infinitive). We find some occurrences of *venire* even earlier, between the 13th and 14th centuries, with higher percentages of culminative use in further times, as during 16th to 19th centuries it reaches about 40%, even if it decreases to 29% in the last period (Strik Lievers 2017: 185). According to Strik Lievers (2017) and Li Destri (2021), this value is the most common with *andare* and *venire* MVPs.

The Spanish MVP *ir/venir a* + infinitive has a similar value, in which the termination is emphasized, even when the idea of movement can be still present (Garachana 2018).

(33)   Spanish, Garachana (2018: 119) [7]
        Al final, *fuimos*   *a parar* a un   restaurante de mala muerte
        at end,   go.PST.1PL   to stop.INF in a   restaurant   of bad death
        'We finally ended up in a dodgy restaurant.'

(34)   Spanish, Garachana (2018: 136)
        Todo el   trabajo *vino*   *a resultar* inútil
        all the   work   come.PST.3SG to result.INF useless
        'All the work came to nothing.'

Yllera (1980: 172) claims that this meaning evolved from putting focus on the end of the path, that is the result of the movement performed. Unlike other Spanish terminative constructions, such as *terminar/acabar por* + infinitive 'to end up', *ir/venir a* + infinitive adds a nuance of meaning denoting a non-acceptance of an unexpected or unwanted situation. Similarly to Strik Lievers's (2017) description of Italian MVPs, the subject of the culminative periphrasis lacks agentive or volitive

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[6]   See Vendler (1957) for definitions.
[7]   This example, already displayed in (7), has been reported again for clarity reasons.

meaning: the action occurs without any direct intervention on their part.[8] According to Garachana (2018), Spanish culminative *ir a* + infinitive is used with past tenses (in the simple past or present perfect) and appears with a restricted set of lexical verbs, as it seems to have evolved into a formulaic expression. It is usually found with verbs that express contact of some type like *caer* 'to fall' and *dar* 'to give', appearance and disappearance (*aparecer* 'to appear', *salir* 'to leave', and *morir* 'to die') or happening in general (i.e. *ocurrir* 'to occur'). In Italian, instead, the periphrastic construction seems to appear with a wider range of verbs (Strik Lievers 2017: 183) and it is not limited to unaccusative and telic verbs.

Some researchers have observed a narrative evolution of *andare* and *venire* (van Hecke 2007, Levie 2015, Silletti 2018), similar to the one described by Bres & Labeau (2013a, 2013b, 2018) for French *aller* + infinitive. According to Silletti (2018: 91), this use is a textual development of the culminative meaning, and it is characterized by a fictional temporal progression in a past context and happens with third person only (35) (36).

(35)   Italian, Silletti (2018: 92)
       Tutto il   secolo è attraversato dal   disagio di fronte all'   arte moderna
       all   the century is marked   by.the unease of face   to.the art modern
       […]. In tempi recentissimi la   grande collezione di arte pop *va*
           in times recent.SUP   the   large   collection of art Pop go.PRS.3SG
       a costituire   il   nucleo fondativo […]
       to constitute.INF   the unit   founding
       'The whole century is marked by the unease in the face of modern art. [...] In very recent times the large collection of Pop Art ends up constituting the founding unit […].'

(36)   Italian, Silletti (2018: 105)
       […] decifrò   l'   impronta civile del   diario. Più   tardi *verrà*
       (he) deciphered the   imprint civil of.the diary. more late   come.FUT.3SG
       a sapere   che […] Calamandrei fu   tra   i   collaboratori
       to know.INF   that […] Calamandrei was among   the   collaborators
       '[…] he deciphered the civil imprint of the diary. He would later find out that […] Calamandrei was among the collaborators.'

The presence of *andare* MVP in past contexts and predominantly with third person subject bears also some resemblance to some description of how Catalan periphrastic perfect started out (Nagy 2010, Paoli & Wolfe 2022). As the origin of Catalan *go*-past is a heavily debated topic with some contrasting evidence, it goes beyond the scope of this paper, and we will not delve deeper into this topic, but further research on this topic seems promising.

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[8]   This loss of control by the subject is one of the characteristic features of the grammaticalization process (see Company Company 2004).

2.3.3. Inchoative-imminential aspect

MVPs can be used to convey the start of a process: this value has been labelled as ingressive, inchoative or imminential. As Boogart (2004: 1172) points out, ingressive and inchoative are often used as synonyms in the literature. Bertinetto (1991: 155) registers as Italian inchoative periphrases *(in)cominciare/iniziare a* + infinitive, other than some more specialized constructions such as *mettersi a* + infinitive 'to put themselves at' or *scoppiare a* + infinitve 'to blow'. Imminential periphrases indicate that an event is about to happen. In Italian they are expressed by s*tare per/essere in procinto di/essere sul punto di/accingersi a* + infinitive (Bertinetto 1991: 158). As it seems that Italian MVPs can express both aspectual values and sometimes distinguishing between these meanings is quite arduous, I chose to use the label inchoative-imminential to refer to them.

(37)   Italian, KIParla
        Andiamo   a esplorare rapidamente anche tra   questa e
        Go.PRS.1PL   to explore.INF quickly   also   between   this   and
        la   prossima lezione Coltrane
        the   next   lecture Coltrane
        'We are going to explore Coltrane quickly between this and the next lecture.'

(38)   Italian, KIParla
        È una delle   prime volte che *vengo   a sapere*   che dei   libri
        is a   of.the first   times that come.PRS.1SG to know.INF that ART   books
        di una biblioteca vanno […]
        of a   library   go […]
        'It's one of the first times I've ever heard of library books going […].'

According to Valentini (2007: 230), activity verbs usually give rise to inchoative-imminential readings, while it rarely happens with achievement and state verbs, which, as said in 2.3.2., are mostly found with culminative MVPs. Accomplishment verbs do not seem to show a preferred value, as they appear with both readings.

Inchoative-imminential value has been recorded later than the culminative one in written texts: based on Strik Lievers's (2017: 185) research, the first appearances in MIDIA corpus with *venire* dates back to the 13th and 14th centuries (even if one occurrence), while periphrasis with *andare* can be traced to the 1692-1840 period. These records comply with Frosini's (2020) report according to which 18th century Italian grammarians warned writers against the use of inchoative-imminential *andare* as it was perceived as a calque from French. According to Frosini's (2020) account, inchoative-imminential *andare* is still not always deemed acceptable, as speakers feel it is a calque from the English *to be going to*. The time of the texts in which it is first attested lead us to exclude the hypothesis of *andare* MVPs being a calque from English, as it was not a prestigious language at the time,[9] but we cannot rule out that its increase in usage in recent years has not been augmented by English (Bombi 2020: 145).

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[9]   See Bombi (2020) on the role of prestige in borrowings and calque.

In numerous reconstructions of the grammaticalization path of the Romance *go*-futures, the inchoative value has been cited as one of the steps that leads to future meaning (Paoli & Wolfe 2022: 137-138). The possibility that this path could lead to the formation of periphrastic future with *andare* has been explored. The morphological future in Italian has been less consistently used to express future and it has developed modal readings (Marchetti 2018). In Fleischman (1982), the lesser use of the synthetic form as future tense is seen as one of the steps for the formation of *go*-futures. According to van Hecke (2007), who compares modal and aspectual values expressed by *aller* + infinitive with *andare a* + infinitive, there are some shared values among the French *aller* + infinitive and the Italian *andare* periphrasis: *aporie épistémique* and *allure extraordinaire*[10] as modal meanings, imminential and prospective readings for aspectual values. Today, we can say that Italian MVPs do not express future meaning, as it is not compatible with time adverbials that refer to future time like *domani* 'tomorrow' or *fra due settimane* 'in two weeks' (39) and it still relays on the morphological future to express future events.

(39)   Italian
         *Domani /Fra due settimane *vado   a spiegar*   -vi   Aristotele
         tomorrow/ in   two weeks   go.PRS.1SG   to explain.INF-you   Aristotle
         'Tomorrow/In two weeks, I'm going to explain Aristotle to you.'

As for *venire*, even if it is possible for an immediate future to evolve from COME (Bybee *et al*. 1994: 269), the construction does not seem productive in Italian. There are very few occurences in MIDIA corpus, and this trend continues in the PAISÀ[11] corpus (Strik Lievers 2017: 185).

2.3.4. Prospection
There has been some discussion on the genesis of culminative and inchoative-imminential values. Strik Lievers (2017) claims that the culminative value is endogenous, while the inchoative uses of *andare* are a calque from French future auxiliary form *aller* + infinitive, even though only the inchoative meaning was retained. Valentini (2007), instead, believes that these values are both of native origins, as it is possible for a motion verb to develop both meanings (Lichtenberk 1991: 487-488). To explain how these two meanings evolved from an endogenous evolutionary process, Paoli & Wolfe's (2022) proposal about how both future and past meanings can evolve from GO seems promising. It has been noted that at early stages GO + infinitive construction does not display any temporal content (Bres & Labeau 2013 for French, Blasco Ferrer 2005 for Occitan). Rather, it has a prospection value, and it describes an event that occurs subsequent to a given reference time. According to Paoli & Wolfe (2022), in narrative texts, where the periphrasis is accompanied by preterite form/historic present, a past interpretation is gained via situational anchoring, while in

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[10]   This terminology has been long used in French studies. For example, Damourette & Pichon ([1911-1936] 1970: § 1652) use *allure extraordinaire* when talking about *aller* + infinitive to refer to "un caractère dérangeant par rapport à l'ordre attendu des choses" (lit. 'a disruptive character to the expected order of things'). These modal values are further discussed in § 2.4.

[11]   The PAISÀ corpus contains an extensive collection of authentic Italian language documents on the Internet (Lyding *et al*. 2014).

direct speech, the periphrasis expressed a prediction/intention, an exhortation, or a command, and then obtained its future interpretation deictically, as the prospective movement arises in the moment of speech.

So, even though we are not suggesting equating Italian MVPs to *go*-futures and *go*-pasts, considering this prospection value as the base reading seems fruitful. For *andare*, we observe a point from which the event proceeds outwards. The inchoative-imminential meaning is elicited when the attention is put on the beginning of the process, while the culminative value comes forward when the end of the process is the focal point. We believe that something similar happens for *venire*: the motion verb draws the border from which the process proceeds onward. As with *andare*, culminative or inchoative interpretations arise depending on the context. The deictic movement towards the speakers that *venire* carries is maintained, as usually in *venire* MVPs the process happens regardless of the subject's wishes.

2.4. Modal values

In the studies on *andare* MVPs, modal values have also been observed. Van Hecke (2007: 566) reports that *andare* can convey *aporie épistémique* (lit. 'epistemic aporia'), a modal value described as the impossibility to know or understand something, as shown in (40). *Andare* is usually in the imperative form followed by *capire* 'to understand' or *sapere* 'to know'.

(40)   Italian, van Hecke (2007: 566)
Va'   *a capire*   cosa gli   passa per   la   testa
go.IMPV.2SG   to understand.INF what to.him pass through the mind
'Go figure what he is thinking.'

Andare MVPs can also express the astonishment of the speaker in front of something unexpected, often conveying the disapproval of the speaker (41), similar to the French and Spanish examples in (4), (5) and (8).

(41)   Italian, van Hecke (2007: 566)
Cosa *andate*   *a*   *credere*?
what go.PRS.2PL   to   believe.INF?
'Do you really believe that?'

Battaglia (1961: I, 453) records this value for *andare* when it is followed by *fare* 'to do', *dire* 'to say' and *pensare* 'to think'. Levie (2013) does not find any tense restriction on this modal use, and she reports instances of MVPs with verbs of every lexical aspect. As mentioned before, van Hecke (2007: 566) describes it as *allure extraordinaire* (lit. 'extraordinary appearance'), in which the event has a disrupting nature compared to the expected order of things. This modal value, also known as mirative (among others, Ross 2016, Cruschina 2022, Di Caro & Molinari 2024), has been recorded in various European languages, such as Swedish (42) and Sicilian from Mussomeli (43): it has been extensively studied with regards to pseudo-coordination, especially with GO as V1.

(42)   Swedish, Josefsson (2014: 27)
         Hon   *har*   *gått*   *och*   *gift*   sig.
         she   have.PRS   go.SUP and   marry.SUP   REFL
         'It so happens that she got married.'

(43)   Sicilian, Cruschina (2013: 279)
         Cuannu   u   vitti   ca   sunava   nna   banna,
         when   him=   see.PST.1SG   that   play.IMPF.3SG in-the band
         vaju   *a*   *pruvu*   na   gioia!
         go.PRS.1SG   to   feel.PRS.1SG a   joy
         'When I saw him play in the band, I felt such a joy!'

Levie points out that the modal mirative value can be found with *venire*, as shown in (44). Attestations like these are scarce in Italian, almost marginal: after all, COME rarely grammaticalize to indicate surprise cross-linguistically (Ross 2016: 12).

(44)   Italian, Levie (2013: 25)
         Non *venite*   -gli   *a dire*   cosa devono bere
         not come.PRS.2PL-to.him   to say.INF   what should drink
         'Don't tell them what they should drink.'

2.5. Sociolinguistics of MVPs in Italian

Contemporary Italian has been undergoing a process of *restandardization* (Berruto 2017), during which new features, previously excluded by the old standard, have been accepted. A significant portion of these traits originates from low varieties, described as *changes from below* in Labov (1994)'s perspective, but *changes from above* have also occurred (Renzi 2012). Renzi (2012) observes that *andare* MVPs appears in formal speech, for example, by lecturers and TV presenters, suggesting that it could be a change from above. Berruto (2012 [1987]) also notes its presence in more formal speech, describing it as a formulaic expression. Additionally, in Levie's (2015) corpus, *andare* MVPs was found to be prevalent in journalistic prose. The widespread use of *andare* MVPs (mostly with inchoative-imminential value) is also frequent in tutorials: Frosini (2020) investigates its presence in online (video) recipes, while Bellone (2020) observes its use in makeup tutorials. There has not been a lot of studies regarding *venire* and *tornare* MVPs spread throughout the varieties of Italian, and we hope that this work will provide more information.

3. Corpora analysis

After having looked at Italian MVPs and their properties, we shift our attention to the data from the query of two corpora of spoken and written Italian. The investigation on the written corpus was conducted during a previous work (Li Destri 2023). Since the data from this study is relevant for our discussion, the results will be reported exhaustively.

In Section 3.1, the corpora used in this research will be described and we will illustrate how the research was conducted. Later, we will investigate the percentage of

use of *andare*, *venire* and *tornare* with functional values, and we will focus on the discrepancy between the use of MVPs in spoken and written texts and the implication regarding the direction of change. Then, we will look more closely at the aspectual values in the speech corpus, as it depicts a different picture from what was known in the literature. Moreover, we will make considerations regarding the role of animacy in the choosing of the aspectual value, mainly for *andare*, building upon the data about first and second person verbs.

3.1. Methodology

The available corpora of Italian appear to be well suited to document in great detail the undergoing process of grammaticalization. The two corpora that will be used to investigate what changes the periphrasis has been running into, CORIS and KIParla, document different diaphasic and diamesic[12] varieties, from written formal to spoken informal.

    CORIS, standing for *CORpus di Italiano Scritto* (Written Italian Corpus), is a synchronic corpus of written texts comprising 165 million words. At the time of its first publication in 2001 it held 100 million words, and since then, it undergoes systematic updates every three years through monitor corpora. This linguistic resource proves helpful in the exploration of diaphasic variation within written Italian, as CORIS is divided into sub-corpora that contain different registers and domains: Press, Fiction, Academic Prose, Legal and Administrative Prose, Miscellanea and Ephemera. To provide a clearer insight into the diverse composition of the corpora, we refer to a table extracted from Rossini Favretti *et al*. (2002: 5).

Table 2. CORIS's composition

Subcorpus	Sections	Subsections
Press	newspapers, periodic, supplement	national, local, specialist, non-specialist connoted, non-connoted
Fiction	novels, short stories	Italian, foreign, for adults, for children, crime, adventure, science fiction, women's literature
Academic Prose	human sciences, natural sciences, physics, experimental sciences	books, reviews, scientific, popular history, philosophy, arts, literary criticism, law, economy, biology, etc.
Legal and Administrative Prose	books, reviews	legal, bureaucratic, administrative
Miscellanea	books, reviews	books on religion, travel, cookery, hobbies, etc.
Ephemera	letters, leaflets, instructions	private, public, printed form, electronic form

Source: Rossini Favretti *et al*. (2002: 5)

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[12]   Diamesic variation, as defined by Mioni (1983), refers to variation arising from the medium, whether written or spoken, through which communication takes place. While it has been regarded as a subdimension of diaphasic variation, we found useful to consider it separately in our analysis.

Since CORIS is *pos*-tagged and lemmatized, a search was conducted for a motion verb followed by *a/ad* and an infinitive form. There are 12.089 occurrences of "*andare + a/ad* + infinitive", 4.780 occurrences of "*venire + a/ad* + infinitive" and 2.441 occurrences of "*tornare + a/ad* + infinitive". However, as it is impossible to take into consideration all occurrences (and moreover CORIS allows to extract only 1000 occurrences for each search), it has been decided to randomly select 600 occurrences for each verb, drawing 100 from each sub-corpus.

KIParla is a corpus of spoken Italian that contains about 1 million words. The 100 hours of recordings are composed of spontaneous conversations, semi-structured interviews, lectures, academic oral exams and professors' office hours (Mauri *et al.* 2019). They were recorded in Bologna (KIP) and Torino (ParlaTO) with speakers from all over Italy. KIParla's structure, too, allow us a deeper analysis in the diaphasic variation of Italian, as it contains a large range of diaphasic situations. As the KIParla corpus is not *pos*-tagged nor lemmatized, a search was performed for various verb forms followed by *a/ad*. Subsequently, the instances with an infinitive verb were manually selected. As the corpus is smaller than CORIS, we took into consideration all the instances for each verb: there are 621 occurrences of "*andare + a/ad* + infinitive", 185 of "*venire + a/ad* + infinitive" and 20 of "*tornare + a/ad* + infinitive", for a total of 826 occurrences.[13]

After collecting all the occurrences, the following step was to discern whether the motion verb had functional value, as it is not possible to do it automatically. To distinguish between functional meanings for *andare* and *venire*, we followed Valentini (2007: 229) suggestion of substituting MVPs with periphrases that convey a similar aspectual value: *accingersi/mettersi a* + infinitive ('to start to') was used for inchoative-imminential meanings, while *finire per* + infinitive ('to end up') for the culminative value. During the coding process, some problems occurred: ambiguity has been encountered in some instances. The occurrences in the CORIS corpus offered less difficulties compared to KIParla, as most of them had a clear functional value. We encountered few ambiguities with *andare* with verbs such as *lavorare* 'to work' or *tornare* with verbs such as *vivere* 'to live'. In (45), while the motion meaning is still present – the subject indeed goes to a workplace - it is not possible to exclude a culminative reading – that is, that he ended up working at this workplace.

(45)   Italian, CORIS
Leoni, che poi *andò*   *a lavorare*   anche lui alla   Panini.
Leoni, that then go.PFV.PST.3SG   to work.INF   also   he at.the Panini
'Leoni, who then went to work/ended up working at Panini as well.'

Cases such as this were counted among those with functional value. A similar approach was taken when dealing with ambiguous occurrences in KIParla, where, however, there were more ambiguities. Difficulties were found in analogous contexts: in (46) we can see an example with *tornare a vivere*.

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[13]   These data were collected before the implementation of the new subcorpus KIPasti.

(46)   Italian, KIParla
Poi di *tornare*   *a vivere*   con mia madre // dopo tre   anni   e
then to return.INF   to live.INF   with my mother// after three years and
mezzo che   vivo   sola
half   that   live   alone
'then to go back living with my mother // after three and a half years of living
alone.'

Both readings are present: there is indeed a motion meaning that the speaker is
indeed moving back at her mother's house, but the speaker conveys that she will be
living with her mother again, that implies a restitution of an earlier state. In few cases,
also, the aspectual meaning expressed by the MVP was not easy to identify. An
example is shown in (47).

(47)   Italian, KIParla
Il   logico conseguire di un' azione da   un'altra azione cioè   succede
the logical consequent of a   action from   a   other action namely happens
qualcosa   te   logicamente *vai*   *a pensare*   che
something   you   logically   go.PRS.2SG   to think.INF   that
succederà   qualcos'   altro
will.happen   something   else
'The logical consequent of one action from another action i.e. if something
happens you logically go think/you end up thinking that something else will
happen.'

In this instance, the substitutions proposed by Valentini (2007), *mettersi a* and
finire per, are both deemed acceptable. These dubious occurrences were judged on a
case-by-case basis: for example, the one in (47) was considered a culminative
periphrasis.

3.2. Data from CORIS

As a starting point, each occurrence was evaluated to discern if it carried aspectual
values. Figure 1 displays the percentage of use of functional *andare*, *venire* and
tornare in each subcorpus of CORIS (100% means that all occurrences in that
subcorpus had aspectual value, while 0% indicates that they all had lexical meaning).

Figure 1. *Andare*, *venire* and *tornare* MVPs in CORIS
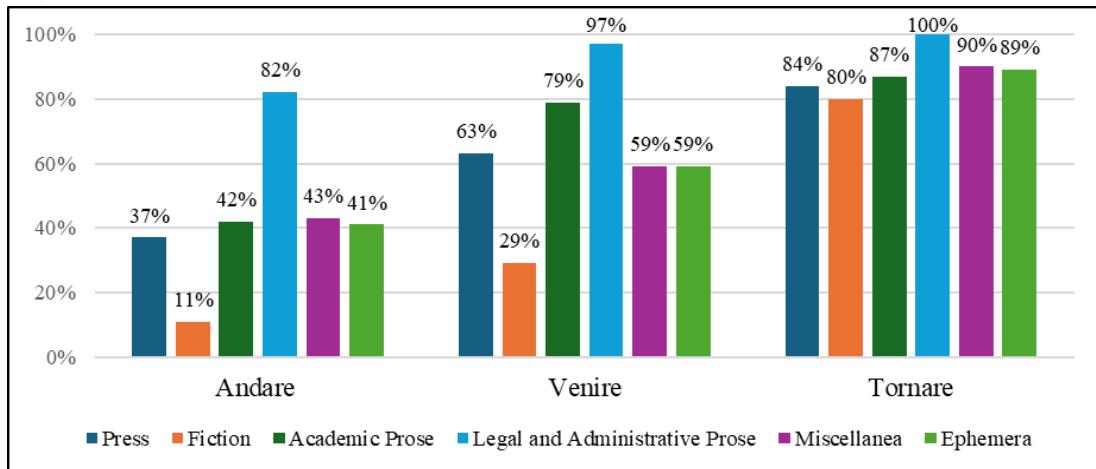
Source: Li Destri (2023)

Overall, the patterns observed with the three verbs are comparable. Fiction subcorpus always exhibits the lowest percentage of occurrences involving the functional use of motion verbs. Conversely, in Legal and Administrative Prose subcorpus, the percentage of periphrastic usage is notably higher for all three verbs, with *tornare* reaching a 100% functional usage rate. The sentence in (48), with the verb *venire*, exemplifies how this MVP is used in legal texts.

(48)   Italian, CORIS
    Revoca   delle   misure   applicate   se   *vengono*
    suspension   of.the   measures   applied   if   come.PRS.3PL
    a   cessare   le   esigenze   cautelari
    to   cease.INF   the   requirements   precautionary
    'Suspension of the measures applied if precautionary requirements cease to exist.'

(49)   Italian, CORIS
    L'   auto   *andò*   *a   sbattere*   contro   il
    the   car   go.PFV.PST.3SG   to   crash.INF   against   the
    fondo   del   dirupo
    bottom   of.the   cliff
    'The car ended up crashing into the bottom of the cliff.'

On the other hand, the sentence in (49) shows one of the few occurrences from the Fiction subcorpus with *andare*. The motion meaning is still present, but the culmination of the event is foregrounded: this is believed to be one of the possible bridge contexts for culminative MVPs. *Andare* has the lowest percentage of functional use, with a minimum of 11%, and an average use of 43%. It exhibits the largest difference (71 percentage points) between Fiction and Legal and Administrative Prose. The periphrastic use of the verb *andare* in other subcorpora, namely Press, Academic Prose, Miscellaneous, and Ephemera, hovers around 40%. *Venire* shows a similar pattern to *andare*, as said before: the highest presence of periphrastic uses is found in Legal and Administrative Prose, nearing 100%, while the lowest is still encountered

in Fiction (29%). The subcorpora Miscellanea, Ephemera, and Press reach approximately 60% of functional use, for an average use of 64%. However, unlike *andare*, *venire* in Academic Prose deviates from the central group, with a percentage of periphrastic uses reaching 79%. An example from a scientific text is displayed in (50).

(50)   Italian, CORIS
Si   *viene*   *a*   *creare*   una   corrente   di ioni
IMPRS   come.PRS.3SG   to   create.INF   a   current   of ions
'A current of ions is created.'

As it appears on Figure 1, *tornare* is the motion verb most consistently used in the periphrastic construction, with an average use of 88%. It follows a pattern similar to *andare* and *venire*, albeit more condensed: at the extremes are Fiction (80%) and Legal and Administrative Prose (100%), while Miscellanea, Ephemera, and Press do not exhibit significant differences. In (51) we see an example from the Miscellanea subcorpus that comes from a magazine.

(51)   Italian, CORIS
Il   grande   schermo   *torna*   *a*   *infiammare*   la
the   big   screen   return.PRS.3SG   to   ignite.INF   the
passione   di   milioni   di   persone
passion   of   millions   of   people
'The silver screen returns to ignite the passion of millions.'

(52)   Italian, CORIS
Tornando   *a*   *parlare*   dell'   attività,   vorrei
return.GER   to   talk.INF   about.the   activity,   would
ricordare   che […]
remember   that […]
'Going back to talk about the activity, I would like to mention that […].'

The sentence in (52), taken from an academic text, displays a type of employ found also with other motion verbs: the deictic nature of motion verbs is used as a tool in text organization. Evolution of motion verbs as textual connectives is known to happen cross-linguistically (cf. Bourdin 2008, Devos 2014).

3.3. Data from KIParla

We applied the same method of analysis on the KIParla corpus: each occurrence was evaluated to distinguish between motion verbs with lexical meaning or aspectual value. The results are displayed in Figure 2 (as before, 100% means that all occurrences in that subcorpus had aspectual value, while 0% indicates that they all had lexical meaning). There are overall fewer occurrences compared to CORIS (total 826; *andare* 621; *venire* 185; *tornare* 20), due to the smaller size of the corpus. As depicted in Figure 2, the trend shows a lesser use of MVPs in KIParla.

Figure 2. *Andare*, *venire* and *tornare* MVPs in KIParla
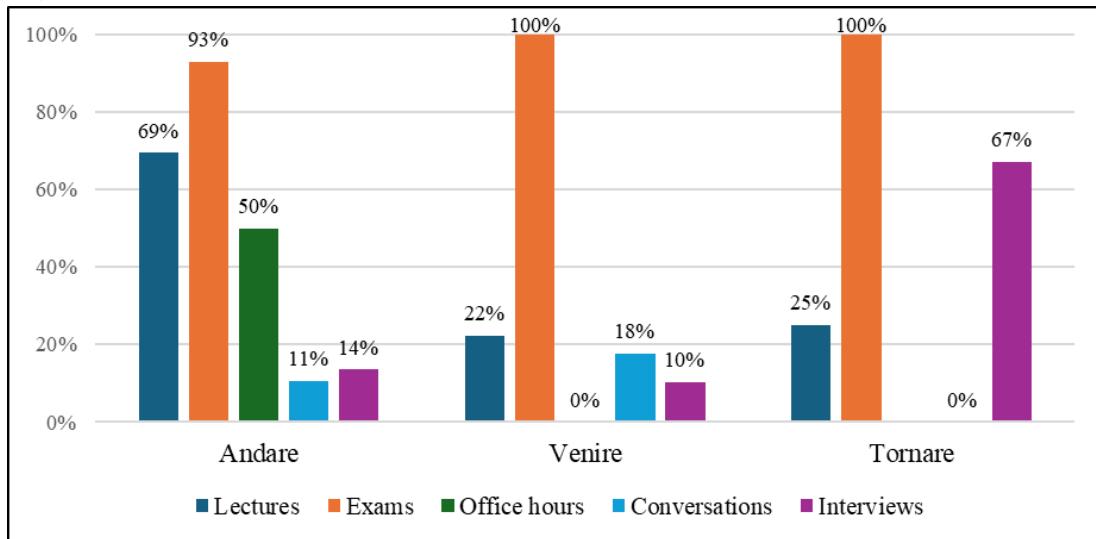
The majority of MVPs with *andare*, *venire* and *tornare* appears in the Exam subcorpus. This trend aligns with previous observation made on university students' writing habits, that shows that among other changes in today Italian, the use of MVP is becoming particularly common in written texts. This change is believed to happen because MVPs are perceived as formal, so appropriate for academic settings (Li Destri 2021). The example in (53) shows the formal use mentioned above, together with *quello che è* 'that which is', a formulaic expression common in formal Italian.[14]

(53)   Italian, KIParla
  La bibliografia nazionale italiana *è* *andata* *a*
  the bibliography national Italian be.PRS.3SG go.PST.PTCP to
  sostituire quello che era il bollettino delle
  replace.INF that that was the bulletin of.the
  pubblicazioni italiane
  publications Italian
  'The Italian national bibliography replaced what used to be the Italian publications bulletin.'

Andare has the largest number of occurrences and displays the shortest gap in the average percentage of functional use between CORIS (43%) and KIParla (21%). Contrastingly, *venire*'s use with functional value has the largest decrease, falling from 64% on average in CORIS to 15% in KIParla. Functional *venire* appears to be scarcely used by professors, while functional *andare* is more frequently attested in this cohort (*andare* MVP is attested up to 69% in Lectures and 50% in Office hours, while *venire* reaches only 22% in Lectures and has no occurrences in Office hours). On the other hand, functional *andare* and *venire* are least frequent in spontaneous speech, as seen in Conversations and Interviews subcorpora. It is quite telling that MVPs are so scarce in informal speech.[15] One of the few examples is shown in (54).

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[14] See Berrutto (2012 [1987]) and Bellone (2020) on *quello che è*.
[15] In these subcorpora 8 instances of *andare* followed by *a* and infinitive with dysphemistic use were found. Since it was judged they were better classifiable as formulaic

(54)   Italian, KIParla
       Quando   si   *vanno*   *a toccare*   emozioni così profonde
       when   IMPRS go.PRS.3PL   to touch.INF   emotions so   deep
       'When you go touch such deep emotions.'

Even though *tornare* does not appear as much as *andare* and *venire* in the KIParla corpus, it appears to be the most commonly used with functional meaning (56% on average) and shows a decrease compared to CORIS average (88%). Like *andare* and *venire*, *tornare* is highly used as a functional verb in Exams, while it seems to be employed to a lesser extent in Lectures and Office hours. However, unlike the other two motion verbs, it shows a higher percentage of use in the Interviews subcorpus. In (55) only the 'again' meaning is conveyed by *tornare*.

(55)   Italian, KIParla
       È   un   po'   pesante sì   *tornare*   *a*   *vivere*
       is   a   little heavy yes   return.INF   to   live.INF
       con   ritmi   di   altri
       with   rhythms   of   others
       'It's a little taxing, yes, going back to live to the rhythms of others.'

Moreover, more instances of mirative modal value of *andare* were found in KIParla than in CORIS: while in CORIS only one occurrence was found – inside a dialogue in the Fiction corpus – KIParla displays 3 examples of this modal value, one of which is shown in (56).

(56)   Italian, KIParla
       Chissà   che   cacchio ha visto, *va*   *a* *capire*
       who.knows   what   heck   has seen   go.PRS.3SG to   understand.INF
       'Who knows what the heck he saw, go figure.'

The query of KIParla allows us to draw some generalizations about the aspectual meanings of the periphrases. As observed in previous studies, the culminative value is recorded as prevalent in corpora of written texts (see Strik Lievers 2017, Li Destri 2021). However, the KIParla corpus allows us to draw a different picture.

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expressions, they were not included neither in the *andare* with motion meaning group nor in the functional *andare* group.

Figure 3. *Andare* and *venire* aspectual values in KIParla
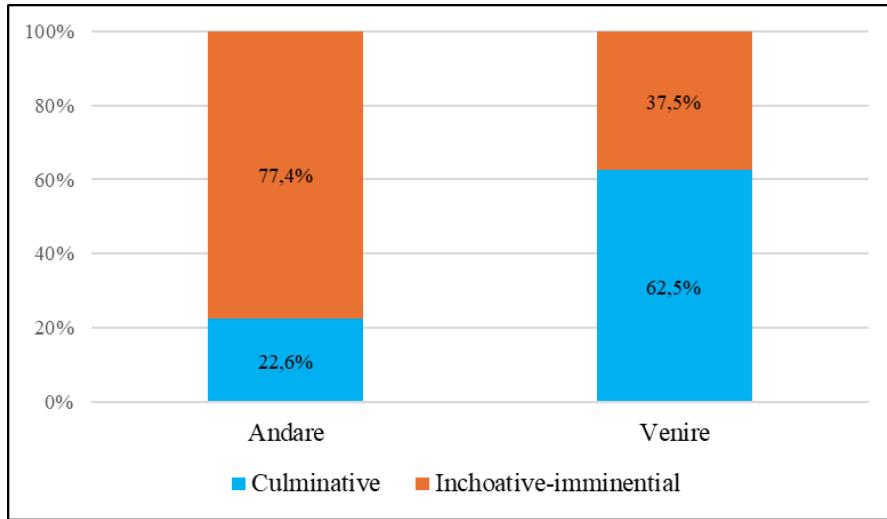
First, the inchoative aspectual value is more highly attested in KIParla compared to previous studies: according to Strik Lievers's (2017) analysis of PAISÀ, only 5% of the instances of *andare* had inchoative-imminental value, while the percentage of *venire* with inchoative-imminental value was as low as 1%. The inchoative-imminental value reaches 77,4% in KIParla with *andare*, while the culminative aspect stops at 22,6%. In the case of *venire*, the instances with inchoative-imminential value do not surpass the occurrences of the culminative aspect, however it is much more attested than in Strik Lievers's (2017) analysis.

A look at the distribution of inchoative-imminential *andare* shows us that this reading appears to be overwhelmingly associated with the presence of first and second person subjects, as shown in Table 3: as these subjects are mostly animate and agentive, this could help us substantiate Strik Lievers's (2017) hypothesis that the preference for this reading could be linked to the animacy of the subject.[16]

Table 3. Aspectual meanings expressed by present tense *andare*

Andare	Culminative	Inchoative-imminential
Vado	-	28
Vai	2	17
Va	11	9
Andiamo	-	21
Andate	-	8
Vanno	6	6

A look at the other tenses of *andare* employed with functional use display an interesting fact: the imperfect tense of *andare* show one of the lowest percentages of

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[16]   The relation between animacy and agency and *go*-futures has been a topic of discussion, and a specialization of *go*-futures with (agentive) first person has been hypothesized, even though there is no agreement on the topic (a.o. Bertinetto & Squartini 2016 on Romance languages, Tagliamonte et al. 2014 on English *be going to*).

use with aspectual values (6%). This gives a more nuanced account about the tense restriction shown in Levie (2017: 56) for functional *andare*: while imperfect tense was believed compatible with functional value and this possibility is indeed shown in (57), it is certainly not the preferred tense. The instances of *andare* in a present or future tense used with a functional meaning are around 30%.

(57)   Italian, KIParla
	Si	*andava*	*a*	*utilizzare*	il	lisato
	IMPRS	go.IMPF.3SG	to	use.INF	the	lysate

‘We were going to use the lysate.’

3.4. Discussion

The data collected allow us to have a better understanding of the distribution of MVPs in Italian. The hypothesis proposed by Renzi (2012) of a change from above for *andare* MVP appears to be confirmed and it seems that we can expand this description to *venire* MVP. The data extracted from KIParla allow us to draw a clear picture: the functional values of *andare* and *venire* are scarcely attested in spontaneous conversations, while their appearance increased in more formal settings such as Exams and Lectures. The diamesic variation is also quite notably shown: the average use of MVPs in KIParla is lower than CORIS. The picture in CORIS is less clear: while Legal and Administrative Prose, generally considered the most formal variety, has the highest percentage of use of MVPs, the difference in attestation among the other subcorpora is less evident. However, the absence of a higher percentage of attestations in Press subcorpus could support the claim that this is a change from above: studies on *neostandard* traits show that the language of the media usually facilitates the ristandardization of substandard phenomena (see Ballarè 2020 for references).

    Andare and *venire*, despite behaving in a similar way, show a striking difference between *andare* on one hand, which is attested as functional verbs both in written and in spoken usage, and *venire* on the other, which is mainly attested as a functional verb in formal registers, preferably in the written usage. *Tornare*, on the other hand, show a different trend. The average use of this MVP is higher in both corpora and, most importantly, *tornare* MVPs is more used in spontaneous conversation compared to *andare* and *venire*. This suggests that *tornare* spread differently through the varieties of Italian.

    The increased attestation of the inchoative-imminential value with *andare* MVPs in spoken Italian raises new questions. Due to the lack of previous quantitative studies on the presence of *andare* MVPs in spoken corpora, we cannot conclusively determine if this is a recent development. However, speakers' perceptions, as reported in Frosini (2020), suggest that the use of this periphrastic construction has increased in recent years. This could indicate a new stage in the grammaticalization process and the subsequent spread of this construction into new varieties of Italian. More conservatively, the higher attestation of the inchoative-imminential value might be attributed to the greater presence of first and second person subjects in speech, which are animate and generally agentive.

4. Conclusions

Motion verbs are known to frequently partake in grammaticalization process across languages. Romance languages are no exception: French and Spanish *go*-futures and Catalan *go*-past show different paths the construction "motion verb + (to) + infinitive" could undergo. Motion verbs *andare*/*venire*/*tornare* + a + infinitive in Italian also lose their lexical meanings to express functional values. They do not convey any temporal meanings, but they can express aspectual values: culminative, inchoative-imminential and iterative. The use of MVPs has been attested since Old Italian. However, it has been limited till most recent time. Corpora analysis allowed us to shed some light on the spread of MVPs through contemporary Italian: *andare* and *venire* MVPs are scarcely attested in informal spontaneous speech, but their occurrences increase in the more formal varieties. It also appears that the use of MVPs depends on diamesic variation, as the percentage of functional use are higher in the written corpus than the spoken corpus. As a result, the data appear to confirm the hypothesis of a change from above. While this trend is also attested with *tornare* MVPs, the iterative value appears more consistently used across all varieties. As for diaphasic and diamesic variation, the analysis of a spoken corpus allowed us to spot another interesting difference between formal written varieties and informal spoken varieties: culminative value was previously recorded as the most common one, building on data coming from written corpora, but a much higher attestation of inchoative-imminential value than expected was found in the speech corpus.

Acknowledgments

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