



A DIACHRONIC OVERVIEW ON THE PREPOSITIONAL ACCUSATIVE AND COMPLEMENTS INTRODUCED BY PREPOSITION A IN PORTUGUESE

UM PANORAMA DIACRÔNICO DO ACUSATIVO PREPOSICIONADO E DOS COMPLEMENTOS INTRODUZIDOS PELA PREPOSIÇÃO A EM PORTUGUÊS

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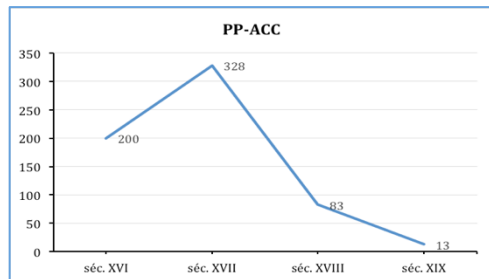


Vienna Workshops on Portuguese Linguistics

Introduction – preposition expression in Portuguese

- One of the several differences between European Portuguese (EP) and Brazilian Portuguese (BP) is the prepositional expression of complements headed by preposition *a*.
- In **EP**, indirect arguments are introduced by **preposition a** in the context of transfer verbs (*enviar*-send), non-directional dynamic verbs (*lavar*-wash), stative verbs (*admirar*-admire) and **psychological verbs** (*agradar*-please).
- (1) O bolo *agradou* **ao** João/*lhe*.DAT
lit. 'The cake pleased John/him'
- In **BP**, these complements may also be introduced by **prepositions para** or **de**. Additionally, with **psychological verbs**, preposition *a* completely disappeared in BP.
- (2) O bolo *agradou* **Ø** o João/*o*.ACC / *ele*.NOM
lit. 'The cake pleased John / him / he'

- In order to account for these facts, I conducted a search for prepositional accusatives (PP-ACC) in the **Historical Portuguese Corpus Tycho Brahe (Unicamp)** in 19 Syntactic Annotated Texts (16th to 19th c. - 819.932 words).
- (cf. Galves et al., 2016)



Questions

- Is PP-ACC in Portuguese equivalent to *Differential Object Marking* (DOM), as in Spanish?
- How to explain the decrease in the 18th century?

Hypothesis

- Portuguese suffered a great *Spanish influence* in the 17thC.
- In the 18th century, the authors wanted to establish their own identity, hence this marking starts to disappear.
- PP-ACC first disappears with *proper and common nouns*, then with *personal pronouns* – **confirmed by this corpus**.
(cf. Ramos, 1992; Gibrail, 2003; Döhla, 2014)

PP - ACC - 624 sentences → (3)

NP - ACC - 7.756 sentences → (4)

- NP-ACC search resulted in a much more expressive number than PP-ACCs, hence PP-ACC seems to a marginal phenomenon in Portuguese, not DOM.

(3) [...] e cá nos mostra o succedido, que sahira Lusbel do Inferno, a dá **a quem** *aborreacia*.

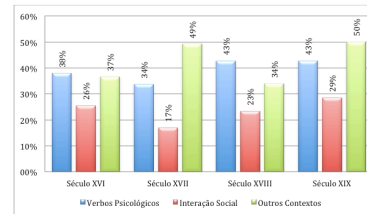
P_{a(to)} whom annoyed 17th c. (C_002,200.878)

(4) Aqui com animoso valor, e maior que todos os perigos, se demorou dez dias, *livrando* **o Deus** do fogo do contágio 'releasing' **the.ART** God

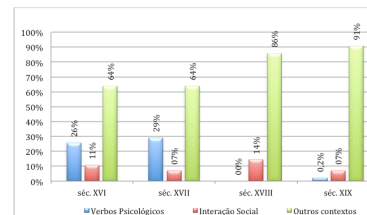
17th c. (B_001_PSD,32.290)

	16th	17th	18th	19th
Relative Pronouns	9% (18)	14% (46)	14,5% (12)	23,1% (3)
Quantifiers	23,5% (47)	14,3% (47)	21,7% (18)	7,7% (1)

Table1 – Categorical status of PP-ACC Objects



PP-ACC – psychological verbs



NP-ACC – psychological verbs

➤ Psychological Verbs

presented a different behavior from other verb classes.

- I am assuming that, in EP, accusative assignment with psychological verbs has shifted to inherent Dative Case (Dat is more specific than ACC, cf. 5), as to ascertain the interpretation of Experiencer to the internal argument of psychological verbs via preposition *a*, as in (cf. 1)(cf. Figueiredo Silva, 2007; Fischer, 2018; Cyrino & Irimia, 2019).

(5) NOM > ACC> DAT> GEN>LOC>ABL>INS>...
(Hardarson, 2016)

Analysis

- When animacy and the categorial status of the PP-ACC objects were taken into account, the results showed this marking in Portuguese is related to specificities of **relative pronouns** and **quantifiers** (cf. Table 1), hence I am assuming it is not DOM.
- In **modern BP**, **preposition a** is used in contexts where the arguments may be Nominative, Accusative or Dative so that the argument is obligatory assigned inherent Accusative Case in the derivation not the Nominative *default*.
- Additionally, they receive Acc. to be interpreted as Experiencer not Agent: (6) A festa *agradou* **a todos**.inherent ACC; (7) **A todos** a festa *agradou* – lit. The party pleased everyone).
- **Further research:** Brazilian corpus; check DPs specificity and definitude.