



**VARIATION IN ROMANCE LANGUAGES:  
OCCITAN AND PORTUGUESE**

**VARIAÇÃO EM LÍNGUAS ROMÂNICAS:  
OCCITANO E PORTUGUÊS**

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This thematic dossier, published in the first issue of volume 24 of *Diadorim: revista de estudos linguísticos e literários* – a journal compiled by the Postgraduate Program in Vernacular Letters at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro –, brings together views on variations and varieties of Portuguese and also on the Occitan language. It is linked to initiatives that have been taken within this program in favor of the broad internationalization of linguistic science promoted in the Brazilian academic sphere.

One of these initiatives stems from the Franco-Brazilian project *VariaR – Variation in Romance Languages* (<https://variar.wixsite.com/variar>), whose team of researchers, working at various universities, is led by professors linked to research and post-graduate programs based at Paul-Valéry University Montpellier III/*Recherches Sur les Suds et les Orient*s unit and at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro/Postgraduate Program in Vernacular Letters. The dossier contains a total of 19 texts, including 13 articles submitted for double-blind evaluation and approved by expert reviewers from Brazil, Portugal, Sweden, the United States and France. It also contains two interviews with two researchers, one with a researcher from the American continent/the United States and another, written in French and Portuguese, with a researcher from the European continent/France, as well as a review of a Brazilian book by a Brazilian researcher.

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The research presented in the articles gathered here focuses on the Portuguese language, which is the subject of the Capes PrInt Project run by the Postgraduate Program in Vernacular Letters, entitled *Voices and Writings in the Different Spaces of the Portuguese Language*. This is another initiative taken in favor of the internationalization of Brazilian linguistic science.

Occitan, language whose importance has often been minimized in descriptions, is another Romance language which forms part of our study interests and, consequently, is the subject of observations made in one of the interviews granted to the organizers of the dossier.

Generally speaking, the texts in this dossier reveal how fruitful and diverse experiences in linguistic science are. They include articles on various linguistic concepts, more precisely concepts in the areas of phonetics/phonology, prosody, lexicon, morphology, syntax, and text/discourse. The dossier also includes texts on issues related to spaces for training researchers and teachers, spaces for teaching and learning (taking into consideration both mother and non-mother languages), as well as spaces for scientific communication and the impact of research results on society. In this way, a wide variety of texts can be read, from an interview about the methodological process of clipping and analyzing linguistic data, given the interest in open science movements, to a review that shows the social implications of research in Letters and Linguistics. The latter pays special attention to an inclusive literacy education process, and also to one of the groups most affected, the elderly, with a view to citizen education. The authors of the texts come from various places: the United States, France, Brazil (Northeast, Southeast, South), Portugal (Lisbon, Coimbra and Madeira Island) and Morocco. The texts are also centered around multiple approaches to variation: Synchronic Variationist Sociolinguistics, Historical Sociolinguistics, Applied Sociolinguistics, Pluridimensional Dialectology and Geosociolinguistics. There are also studies of variation that align with the work done in the so-called first and third waves of scientific practices in the broad area of the Theory of Variation and Change.

The dossier in this issue of this Brazilian journal was conceived to accommodate the scientific expression generated from empirical observations on variation in Romance languages in Brazil and in the world. However, the articles focus on the Portuguese language. On the one hand, the articles received, dealing only with uses of the Portuguese language, confirm the vitality of what has been said and written about it in the scientific community that works within Brazil or in other countries. On the other hand, to some extent they also indicate that it is important to invest, on Brazilian territory, in actions and interactions relating to the description of Romance languages and comparisons between Portuguese and one or several other Romance language(s). This constitutes a scientific investment guideline for the VariaR Project team. Thereby, fields of action to be explored and a work agenda to be built have emerged, allowing us to gather speeches and writings with a comparative profile that show divergences, but, mainly, convergences related to a multilingual knowledge that is assumed to involve degrees of diasystematicity. This can create a link with previous efforts which can be found, by way

of illustration, in publications focused on (i) one or more varieties of the Portuguese language (MARTINS; ABRAÇADO, 2015, BRANDÃO, 2018, DE PAULA et al, 2018, to name a few works), (ii) the Afro-Brazilian *continuum*, such as *The Portuguese Language Continuum in Africa and Brazil* (LÓPEZ; GONÇALVES; AVELAR, 2018), and (iii) Romance languages, for example *The Oxford Guide to the Romance Languages* (LEDGEWAY; MAIDEN, 2016), the *Manual of Romance Sociolinguistics* (AYRES-BENNETT; CARRUTHERS, 2018) and the book *Variation in Portuguese and Other Romance Languages* (MACHADO VIEIRA; MEIRELES, 2022). The latter is organized mainly around the study of variations in Portuguese, but it includes other Romance languages (Spanish, French and Italian).

The vision that guided this dossier is in synergy, therefore, with the collective effort to continue not only to map Portuguese in its various contemporary national/dialectal manifestations, but also to place it in the Romance language family, in order to establish a common ground of generalizations and specificities, as well as to influence the training of human resources for work in science and education. Each contribution to this dossier is therefore presented in the spirit of fostering a network of collaborations for the mapping of variation in Romance languages as closely as possible to a pluricentric linguistic reality. The first texts are the interviews, which are followed by the articles and, finally, the review.

The interview given by Professor Adriana Picoral, who works at the University of Arizona, focuses on topics related to the science of linguistic data analysis, information science and computational science. Currently investigating linguistic variation in Brazilian Portuguese on the social network Twitter and variation in English spoken by learners, the researcher deals in particular with methods of linguistic analysis related to the variationist approach of Sociolinguistics, as well as to Corpus Linguistics. She highlights the importance of statistical methods for the generalization of reliable linguistic analyses and, above all, the importance of these methods being reproducible in new investigations, a guarantee of quality of the analysis itself and one of the *FAIR* principles in line with the requirements of open science. Another aspect highlighted by the professor is the need to encourage the training of linguists in exact sciences. She also talks about her role in the global initiative *Women in Data Science*, for the inclusion of women in spaces where they are under-represented, such as the information technology sector.

The interview given in French by Hervé Lieutard, Titular Professor of Occitan Linguistics at Paul-Valéry University Montpellier III has been translated into Portuguese for greater accessibility to the non-French-speaking public. In this interview, the professor, who specializes in the analysis of the dialectal variation of Occitan, a language currently spoken in three different countries (France, Spain and Italy), provides a brief overview of the status and difficulties of research into Occitan, based on the social position of this language throughout its history on French territory. The professor highlights the social decline of the use of this language over

time, the result of a long-standing linguistic policy that has reduced its importance in French society, to the point of its being considered a regional language with no official status, despite the importance of its historical development, usage, linguistic contacts and linguistic variation. The linguist also talks about the processes that have contributed to revitalizing the language, such as the growing interest of the academic community and the expansion of the teaching offer.

*Acquisition/Teaching of European Portuguese by/to Arabic Speakers in Morocco: Specificities and Response Elements* is the first article. It was written by the researchers Maria Antónia Mota (from the University of Lisbon, Portugal) and Habiba Naciri (from Mohammed V-Rabat University, Morocco). It focuses on the framework, from an academic and sociolinguistic point of view, of the first University Degree in Portuguese Studies in the Arab world, which began in the academic year of 2009-2010. The authors highlight the institutional cooperation that gave rise to the proposition of such a degree, the social multilingualism that characterizes the student population of Morocco interested in Portuguese, the conditions in which Portuguese constitutes an additional language, and the construction of teaching materials for late acquisition of European Portuguese as a foreign language by Arabic speakers through the development of the MAPEAR Project. They also illustrate, using linguistic facts, some aspects detected in the written and oral productions of students, as well as reflecting on what linguistic data suggests regarding interlanguages and actions in Portuguese teaching spaces.

The paper *Linguistic Variation, Portuguese Language Teaching and Linguistic Attitudes*, by Juliana Bertucci Barbosa (professor at the Federal University of Triângulo Mineiro, contributor to the UNESP/Araraquara Postgraduate Program in Linguistics and Portuguese Language) and Daiana Lombardi from Cuba (researcher at São Paulo State University/Araraquara, teacher of Basic Education), deals with the issue of working with linguistic variation in teaching spaces. Bearing in mind the National Curriculum Parameters (PCN), the authors discuss the new paths of Sociolinguistics in the field of education and also present results of a test of linguistic attitudes applied to Basic Education students.

Aline Maria Bazenga (from the University of Madeira) is the author of the article *Subject Expression in Spoken Varieties of Portuguese*. In this article, when describing data linked to a morphosyntactic phenomenon, the researcher deals with the relationship between spoken varieties of Portuguese and the diverse historical, social and cultural profiles of the communities that use them. She focuses on the variable expression of the (null and pronominal) subject, examining it based on contributions from theoretical models of linguistic variation within the scope of Generative Grammar, Linguistic Typology and Sociolinguistics.

*The Pronominal Subject in Alagoas: A Case of Change in Progress*, written by Maria Auxiliadora da Silva Cavalcante (from the Federal University of Alagoas), focuses on the alleged preference for full realizations to the detriment of null subjects that appears in the studies of speech samples carried out in the Southeast region. Using a sample of data from Alagoas

concerning the space of pronominal subjects examined based on guidelines from the Theory of Linguistic Variation, the author gathers evidence of a process of change in the direction of a greater inclination towards the realization of pronominal subjects.

In *Variation of the Subjective Pronouns nós and a gente in the Second Decade of the 2000s: Linguistic Factors*, written by Maylle Lima Freitas, Lorena da Silva Rodrigues and Hugo Leonardo Gomes dos Santos (all from the Federal University of Ceará), the authors focus on the results of the study of the variation of subject pronouns *nós* and *a gente* in a Brazilian Portuguese speech community: speakers from Fortaleza-CE with an university education in the second decade of the 2000s. The investigation described in this article was carried out based on the assumptions of the Theory of Variation and Change and on interviews from the Description of Cultivated Oral Portuguese in Fortaleza Project/Projeto Português Oral Culto de Fortaleza (PORCUFORT).

Luiz Fernando de Carvalho (from the Federal University of Minas Gerais), in *The Effect of Linguistic Parallelism on the Dispute between the Indicative and the Subjunctive in the Formation of the 2nd Person Singular Imperative in Historical Portuguese from Minas Gerais (19th and 20th Centuries)*, gathers empirical evidence, based on historical samples (19th century and 20th century original handwritten letters from Minas Gerais), to show that imperative variation is sensitive to syntactic and phonic parallelisms. He then discusses the issue of linguistic conditioning in the dynamics of variation.

In *Nominal Agreement as a Marker Style of Construction of the Stereotyped Persona of the UFSC Academic*, Ariele Helena Holz Nunes and Sabrina Vieira Teixeira (both from the Federal University of Santa Catarina), show the importance of nominal agreement as a stylistic marker of the identity of the academic persona in light of sociolinguistic orientations, especially those linked to the so-called third wave, and of records made possible by interviews using the Labovian variationist models of the first wave.

The paper *Diminutive Value of the Suffix -ão in Portuguese*, written by Graça Rio-Torto (from the University of Coimbra), brings a description of the use of the suffix *-ão* in Portuguese, taking into account its semantic duality as a diminutive and an augmentative. Using sources of Portuguese showing occurrences of the suffix with the diminutive value which, although less common, is also present in other Romance languages, the author analyzes the structural and historical conditions of the occurrence of this Romance pattern in the Portuguese language, based on the theoretical framework of constructional and cognitivist morphology.

In *Variation in the Semantic Field of “Weights and Measures”*: *A Study of the Lexicon of Santa Catarina*, written by Antonio Luiz Gubert (from the Federal Institute of Santa Catarina) and Vanderci de Andrade Aguilera (State University of Londrina), the authors show the results of research on the lexicon of “weights and measures” used in the region of Xanxerê (Santa Catarina) and in surrounding municipalities. To do so, they make use of theoretical orientations

from Pluridimensional Dialectology and Geosociolinguistics, and explore diachronic, diagenational, diastratic and diasexual variation.

Botar *the Son to School: The Verbs botar and colocar in the Speech of Fortaleza-CE* is another article that highlights a variation on the lexical level. It was written by Camilo Murilo Alves de Lavor, Aluiza Alves de Araújo and Rakel Beserra de Macedo Viana (all from the State University of Ceará). The researchers carry out a sociolinguistic analysis of the effect of groups of linguistic and extralinguistic factors on the alternation between verbs in uses derived from the NORPOFOR (Norma Oral do Português de Fortaleza / Oral Norm of Portuguese from Fortaleza).

In the article *The Type of Phrase in the Presence of the Definite Article Before Possessives*, Manoel Siqueira (from the Federal University of Sergipe) empirically explores, based on the sociolinguistic observation of data from speech samples of university students at the Federal University of Sergipe, the bias detected in other Brazilian investigations regarding the relationship between variable syntagm type and variants categorized by presence and absence of the article.

*Pretonic mid-vowels in Libolo Portuguese (Angola): comparisons with Brazilian Portuguese* is a paper written by Paloma Moreira Freire and Flaviane Romani Fernandes Svartman (researchers from the University of São Paulo). The authors aim to contribute to the description of the African variety of Portuguese in Libolo. Then, based on the observation of certain aspects, they present how the pretonic vowels of Portuguese from Libolo/Angola (PL) are pronounced, comparing what they detect to the results obtained from descriptions found in literature on pretonic vowels in Brazilian Portuguese (BP). For this comparison, they explore data from spontaneous speech recordings produced by six Angolan speakers from the municipality of Libolo. The authors highlight the following results: in PL, unlike in BP, mid-low vowels and the phenomenon of vowel lowering in the pretonic position are absent. As in Brazilian Portuguese, the pretonic mid-high vowels of Portuguese from Libolo can be subject to the phenomenon of vowel lifting. Lastly, the varieties of PB from São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul are, so far, the most similar to PL.

In *Aspects of Intonation in Speech of Schizophrenic Patients*, written by Waldemar Ferreira Netto (University of São Paulo), Marcus Vinícius Moreira Martins (State University of Minas Gerais) and Ana Cristina Aparecida Jorge (University of São Paulo), a methodology for characterizing intonation in the speech of subjects with schizophrenia is developed, which can facilitate the diagnosis of patients. For this study, the authors carried out an experiment with 10 patients with schizophrenia and 10 control subjects, using the ExProsodia application and Shannon's entropy calculation for the analyzed sentences. The results obtained indicate that the speech intonation of subjects with schizophrenia shows a strong tendency to decrease the amount of information that can be detected through the variation of F0.

In *EJA and the Elderly: Paths to Inclusion*, Maria Cecília de Magalhães Mollica (from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro) proposes a review of the book *Alfabetização e idosos – um tema urgente no Brasil* (Literacy and the Elderly – an Urgent Topic in Brazil), by Kátia Abreu (from the State University of Rio de Janeiro) and Maria Carlota Rosa (from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro). By summarizing aspects of its 18 chapters linked to writing systems, learning to read and literacy through Youth and Adult Education, the researcher invites the academic-professional community in the area of Letters and Linguistics to read the book, specifically those interested in education movements and routes in Brazil and in the link between the theoretical-scientific world and public policies.

This dossier is the result of the gathering of these abundant contributions. They offer the reader a valuable panoramic view in Linguistics, based on the variable uses of the Portuguese and Occitan languages as well as on a wide repertoire of theoretical, methodological, analytical and descriptive perspectives of the phenomenon of variation observed in different academic spaces in Brazil and other American and European countries.

The organizers of this dossier are very grateful to the journal's editorial team for the opportunity, and to the issue's design team. We are very grateful to the advisory board and the reviewers who gave their time and effort to the examination of each article submitted, in order to select the articles found here. We are also grateful to the professors, students and other professionals of the Postgraduate Program in Vernacular Letters for their support in the wide dissemination of this dossier and of the wonderful issue of which it is part. We also thank the team from Paul-Valéry University Montpellier III, for the fruitful dialogue since the conception of the VariaR Project. Finally, we invite the reader to appreciate the dossier, in the certainty that it contains ample matter for reflection, description and/or action that may impact other science and education movements and spaces. We hope, therefore, that the reader will benefit from it.

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