



# **Dative possession in written Brazilian Portuguese**

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## List of abbreviations

BP	Brazilian Portuguese
EP	European Portuguese
DP	Dative possession <i>or</i> possessor
CA	<i>Contos amazônicos</i> (Inglês de Sousa)
OC	<i>Os caboclos</i> (Valdomiro Silveira)
PS	<i>Pelo sertão</i> (Afonso Arinos)
dial.	dialogue
narr.	narrative
EP(C)	external possession construction
IP(C)	internal possession construction
PM	possessum <i>or</i> possessee
PR	possessor
SP.	Spanish
IT.	Italian
FR.	French
RO.	Romanian
PP	prepositional phrase

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## Introduction

Portugal's centuries-old history of colonization around the globe, particularly in Brazil and in Africa, makes Portuguese a fascinating language to study if one is interested in language variation and change.

Take pronominal clitic syntax, for instance. On the one hand, Brazilian Portuguese (BP) contrasts with European Portuguese (EP) because the placement of the object pronoun before or after the verb (called 'proclisis' and 'enclisis', respectively) depends mainly on the type of clause and on the presence of certain pre-verbal elements in the latter, whereas in the former the clitic is always placed before the verb, regardless of the syntactic context. That means that, in a way, BP is actually closer to the other Romance languages in which it has proclisis as a default, unmarked position (albeit each language has its own restrictions) and EP clearly stands out among its own language family. On the other hand, there is a great deal of variation inside Brazil itself. To mention only one specific example, educated Brazilian speakers do use enclisis when they write, especially in higher registers, even though proclisis is the only acceptable option in Brazilian vernacular.

The same goes with external possession constructions (EPCs) using the dative clitic in Portuguese. Basically, external possession happens when the possessor (PR) and the possessum (PM) (or 'possessee') "fail to form a single noun phrase constituent" (Martin, 1999, p. 229). European languages, including Portuguese and its Romance counterparts, often express external possession by encoding the possessor as a dative clitic (Haspelmath, 1999) (e.g. *Toquei-LHE a mão*, 'I touched his hand'). It is, of course, one of the alternatives to the more widespread and often (but not always) unmarked internal possession construction (IPC), in which the possessor is confined to the NP of which the possessee is the head (e.g. *Toquei a sua mão*). That being said, dative EPCs are not equally productive across Romance languages, as each language may have its own restrictions with regards to the type of PM (e.g. body parts, kinship terms, possessed items...), the animacy of the possessor (human, animal or inanimate), the semantic class of the verb (e.g. action, process or state), etc. Remarkably, dative EPCs

are frequently attested in European Portuguese but almost completely absent from BP, except when used in idioms or fossilized expressions.

As Portuguese is not often directly or lengthily addressed in the studies that we have come across (among them Payne & Barshi, 1999a and Tasmowski, 2001), we have decided it was time to give a fuller descriptive account of dative EPCs in Portuguese and try to situate the language in the context of the other Romance languages. In order to do so, I have chosen a corpus of Brazilian literary texts from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century so that, in the future, we would be able to compare it to Portuguese *and* to Brazilian (contemporary, post-modernist) literary language.

This paper is organized as follows. The first part presents a brief overview of external possession and dative EPCs in some Romance languages and in BP and EP. The second part presents the study we have conducted on our corpus of Brazilian literary texts assembled in an effort to describe written BP.

Finally, what is really interesting here is that, despite being so intimately related, BP and EP cannot be tarred with the same brush. Differences between BP and EP might help us understand change and stages of development among Romance languages as a whole, while studying written BP allows us to catch a glimpse of the inner workings of two different competing systems (the vernacular and the prescriptive norm) through the linguistic choices of the speaker. This article constitutes our very first step to achieve this for dative external possession constructions.

# Theoretical grounds

## 1 Internal possession vs external possession

Essentially, the term ‘external possession’ refers to those constructions in which the possessor (PR) and the possessum (PM) do not form a single NP constituent. Instead, the possessor is encoded in the core argument structure of the verb, and thus separate from the possessum (Payne et al., 1999b, p. 3; Van Peteghem, 2001, p. 149; Lamiroy, 2001, p. 101; Heine, 1997, pp. 164-165) (compare 1 and 3 to 2 and 4, respectively).

1 John-ga oneesan-ga totemo kirei-da  
John-NOM older;sister-NOM very pretty-is  
‘John’s older sister is very pretty.’ (Uehara, 1999, p. 46) (EPC)

2 John-no oneesan-ga totemo kirei-da  
John-GEN older;sister-NOM very pretty-is  
‘John’s older sister is very pretty.’ (Uehara, 1999, p. 46) (IPC)

3 Je lui ai pris la main  
I 3SG.DAT have taken the hand  
‘I took him/her the hand’ → ‘I took his/her hand’<sup>1</sup> (Deal, 2013, p. 2)

4 J’ai pris sa main  
I-have taken POSS hand  
‘I took his/her hand’ (Deal, 2013, p. 2)

One could say, then, that internal possession focuses on the relationship between the possessor and the possessee (the former depending on the latter) whereas external possession focuses on the relationship between the verb and its arguments. Besides the asymmetry between syntax and semantic in external possession, Payne et al. (1999b, p. 15) bring to our attention the fact that “certain EPC types appear to ‘break the rules’ about how many arguments a verb of a given valence can have, and

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<sup>1</sup> The first sentence is a more literal translation and the second conveys the essential meaning of the original phrase.



challenge the notion that clause-level syntax depends directly on the argument structure and subcategorization frames of individual verbs or verb stems”.

Finally, in many languages, IPCs are unmarked – and thus more frequent – while EPCs are usually more restricted (Martin, 1999, p. 229)<sup>2</sup>. More specifically, Romance languages may express the possessor internally as a possessive pronoun<sup>3</sup> (see examples 5-7) or as a prepositional phrase (PP) (examples 8-10) (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 2).

- 5 Un conducteur coincé avec un enfant dans SA voiture [...] (FR.) ‘A driver stuck with a child in his car [...]’ (RTL Info, 2016)
- 6 Sorprende il ladro a rubare nella SUA auto: preso (IT.) ‘He surprises the thief stealing in his car: arrested’ (Corriere di Viterbo, 2016)
- 7 Una mujer quedó atrapada en SU coche [...] (SP.) ‘A woman got trapped in her car [...]’ (La Voz de Galicia, 2016)
- 8 [...] la voiture DE LA VOISINE traverse la route [...] (FR.) ‘[...] the neighbor’s car crosses the road [...]’ (La Voix du Nord, 2014)
- 9 [...] prende a calci la macchina DELLA VICINA DI CASA (IT.) ‘[...] he kicks the neighbor’s car’ (Libertà, 2013)
- 10 Detenida una pareja acusada de dañar el coche DE LA VECINA (SP.) ‘Couple accused of damaging the neighbor’s car arrested’ (20 minutos, 2014)

## 2 External possession in the Romance languages

There are a few different ways of conveying external possession in Romance languages<sup>4</sup>. French, Italian and Spanish, for example, can encode the possessor as a

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<sup>2</sup> Romanian constitutes a notable exception, as we will see later on (Van Peteghem, 2001, p. 153).

<sup>3</sup> Van Peteghem (2012, p. 609) explains that, syntactically speaking, possessors in Romance “appear in adnominal position” (some acting more like determiners, others like adjectives – see section 2), but that, semantically, they behave like pronouns because they “refer to an entity”. For that reason, instead of talking about possessive adjectives or determiners, we have decided to use ‘possessive pronoun’ as an umbrella term.

<sup>4</sup> For a more exhaustive overview of external possession constructions around the world, see Payne et al. (1999b).

nominative subject (implicit possession<sup>5</sup> – examples 11-13) or as an accusative (14-16) or a dative clitic (17-19) (possessor splitting and dative possession<sup>6</sup>, respectively) (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 5; Lamiroy, 2001, p. 101). We will be focusing on dative EPCs in this paper.

- 11 LES ENFANTS lèvent la main (FR.) ‘The children raise the hand → their hand’ (Van de Velde et al., p. 6)
- 12 [...] I BAMBINI alzano la mano per chiedere il permesso di fare qualsiasi cosa’ (IT.)  
‘[...] the children raise the hand → their hand to ask for permission to do anything’  
(Eticamente, 2016)
- 13 [...] LOS NIÑOS levantan la mano e intentan contestar todas las preguntas (SP.)  
‘[...] the boys raise the hand → their hand and try to answer all the questions’  
(Revista Capital, 2015)
- 14 Il LA baisait au front (FR.) ‘He kissed her on the forehead’ (Van de Velde et al., p. 14)
- 15 [...] qualche fiamma che LO ha colpito sulla gamba [...] (IT.) ‘[...] a flame, which struck him on the leg [...]’ (Motorsport.it, 2015)
- 16 Francisco se acercó a mi madre, LA besó en la frente [...] (SP.) ‘Francisco approached my mother, kissed her on the forehead [...]’ (El Mundo, 2016)
- 17 [...] il LUI a cassé les pieds (FR.) ‘He broke his/her feet’ → ‘He annoyed him/her’  
(Cornwell, 2015)
- 18 [...] sa che à lei per la felicità e la paura che GLI stringono il cuore (IT.) ‘He knows that it is her because of the happiness and the fear that grip his heart’ (Corriere della Sera, 2016)

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<sup>5</sup> This construction is also called ‘possessor deletion’ because there is not explicit possessor. That being said, Heine (1997, pp. 171-172) remarks that “there is no evidence that there ever was a possessor in the construction concerned”.

<sup>6</sup> Also called ‘possessor raising’ sometimes (see Payne et al., 1999b).

19 El joven que LE robó el corazón a Marc Anthony (SP.) ‘The young man who stole Marc Anthony’s heart’ (La Opinión, 2016)

According to Haspelmath (1999, p. 119), dative possessors are highly characteristic of European EPCs. He explains that non-European languages frequently have the external possessor “[take] the syntactic relation of the possessum (i.e., generally object or subject [...])” instead of making it “occupy an additional clause-level position” as European languages, including the Romance branch, usually do.

It is worth noting, however, that while implicit possession and possessor splitting structures remain stable in French, Italian and Spanish, dative possession is not equally attested in those three languages (Van de Velde et al., 2016, pp. 13-14; Lamiroy, 2001, p. 108). Indeed, dative possessors are much more productive (i.e. occur more frequently and in broader contexts) in Spanish than in Italian and French, for example.

Indeed, Spanish allows [-HUMAN] (20) and [-ANIMATE] (21) possessors, unlike Italian and French, which rule out inanimate PRs<sup>7</sup> (see 22 and 23, respectively). Similarly, the dative possessor can occur with kinship possessa in Spanish (24), something that still happens in certain contexts in Italian (compare 25 and 26) but that is strictly forbidden in French (27) (which only allows body part PMs<sup>8</sup> - Haspelmath (1999, p. 114)) (Van de Velde et al., pp. 13-14; Lamiroy, 2001, pp. 105-106; Van Peteghem, 2001, pp. 150-152)<sup>9</sup>. Italian and Spanish also allow dative possessors with certain alienable PMs (see 28 and 29, respectively). Finally, in French, the dative possessor survives essentially in fixed, idiomatic expressions (31) (Van de Velde et al., pp. 15-16).

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<sup>7</sup> Van Peteghem (2001, pp. 152-153) says that French does not accept [-human] PRs. That being said, we have been able to find some internet examples in which the PR corefered with animal antecedents: *Ici, le lion est passé chez le coiffeur qui LUI a coupé la crinière, et le voilà devenu chat !* (L'école des max), *Un gang de braconniers en hélicoptère [a poursuivi le rhinocéros] avec son petit de 4 semaines [...] et LUI a coupé les cornes à la tronçonneuse* (National Geographic, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> That is why external possession in French is usually referred to as ‘inalienable possession’ (Martin, 1999, p. 229).

<sup>9</sup> We refer the reader to Van de Velde et al. (2016) for more examples.

- 20 Entre tres y cinco hombres reducen a cada caballo y otros LE cortan la crin (SP.) (El Mundo, 2011)
- 21 LE freguélas manchas al tablero (SP.) (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 13)
- 22 \*GLI ho pulito le macchie al tavolo (IT.) (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 14)
- 23 \*Je LUI ai tâché la couverture [au livre] (FR.) (Van Peteghem, 2001, p. 152)
- 24 Se LES casa la última hija (SP.) (Lamiroy, 2001, p. 106)
- 25 GLI sono morti due figli nell'incidente (IT.) (Lamiroy, 2001, p. 106)
- 26 ?GLI si sposa la figlia domani (IT.) (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 14)
- 27 \*Deux enfants LUI sont morts dans l'accident (FR.) (Lamiroy, 2001, p. 106)
- 28 [...] oggi è costretto in una residenza per anziani [...] perchè dei rom GLI hanno occupato la casa (IT.) (Oggi, 2016)
- 29 [...] la tía Antonia es la única que los ha cuidado y no LE han dejado la casa (SP.) (El Periódico, 2016)
- 30 \*Il LUI a visité la maison (FR.) (our example)
- 31 Son adversaire LUI a cassé les pieds, au sens propre comme au figuré (FR.) (Le Figaro, 2016)

But let us not forget about Romanian. It is true that French is the language (among those we have mentioned here) in which dative EPCs are the most restricted, but it would seem that Romanian – and not Spanish – is at the other end of the continuum (Lamiroy, 2001, p. 108). Indeed, Romanian accepts [-HUMAN] (32) and [-ANIMATE] (33) PRs and allows all sorts of PMs (body parts (32), kinship terms (34), possessed objects (35), and so on) (Van Peteghem, 2001, pp. 154-155). Furthermore, Lamiroy (2001, p. 105) observes that the construction combining the dative PR and the passive *se* is even more productive in Romanian than it is in Spanish (compare 36 and 37, respectively) and – last but not least – Van Peteghem (2001, p. 153) tells us that it is the IPC with the possessive pronoun that is marked and emphatic in Romanian,

whereas the dative EPC functions as an unmarked alternative (which might actually help explain why dative PRs are so productive in the language).

32 MI-am rupt mîna (RO.) 'I have broken my hand' (Van Peteghem, 2001, p. 149)

33 Am aprins televizorul cu un gest reflex, dar I-am închis sonorul (RO.) 'I have turned on the television with a reflex gesture, but I have turned off its sound' (Van Peteghem, 2001, p. 155)

34 Ioan ŞI-a sărutat nevasta (RO.) 'John kissed his wife' (Lamiroy, 2001, p. 106)

35 MI-am uitat ceasul pe noptieră (RO.) 'I have forgotten my watch on the nightstand' (Van Peteghem, 2001, p. 154)

36 Ştiu că Ioan ȚI-e bun prieten (RO.) 'I know John is a good friend of yours' (Lamiroy, 2001, p. 107)

37 \*Sé que Juan te es buen amigo (SP.) (Lamiroy, 2001, p. 107)

### 3 External possession in Portuguese

We have talked about French, Italian, Spanish and Romanian – but what about external possession in Portuguese? More specifically, how does the language fit into the dative EP continuum for Romance languages? Furthermore, there are bound to be differences between the Brazilian and European varieties – what are they?

First, Portuguese has implicit possession like its Romance counterparts (see example 38). It also uses an accusative clitic in possessor splitting constructions (39) and a dative clitic in dative possession (40 and 41), just as Spanish, Italian and French do.

38 Marco contou que cinco pessoas levantaram a mão [...] (PT.) 'Marco told that five people raised their hand [...]' (UOL, 2016)

39 [...] feriram-NO no pescoço (PT.) '[...] they hurt him on the neck' (Jornal do Fundão, 2008)

40 No outro dia, lavei-LHE o cabelo (PT.) 'I washed his/her hair the other day' (Gama, 2015)

41 Sem dar palavra, peguei-LHE a mão (PT.) ‘I took his/her hand without a word’ (Taunay, 2005, p. 48)

Like Spanish, Portuguese also allows dative possession with kinship (42 and 43) and alienable PMs (e.g. 44 and 45) (remember, for example, that French only accepts body part PMs and that Italian does not allow kinship PMs in every context).

42 Da primeira [mulher], mataram-LHE o filho (PT.) ‘Of the first [woman], they killed her son’ (Totti, 2011)

43 Ajudaste-ME a esposa alucinada (PT.) ‘You helped my crazed wife’ (CVDEE, 2001)

44 [...] que vá [...] retirar-LHE o cão (PT.) ‘[...] [asking] that [the association] go [...] take away his dog’ (or: ‘take the dog away from him/her’)<sup>10</sup> (Correio da Manhã, 2016)

45 roubaram-LHE o carro (PT.) ‘[...] they stole his/her car’ (or: ‘steal the car from him/her’) (Jornal de Notícias, 2014)

However, as it often happens, EP and BP do not behave in the same way. Indeed, dative EPCs are still available in EP but have nearly disappeared from BP, where they tend to be replaced by a genitive construction (compare examples 46 and 47) (Lamiroy, 2001, p. 109; Morais et al., 2014, pp. 31-32, 43). EP speakers may alternate between the dative and the genitive constructions; however, the latter has completely ousted the former in spoken variety (Morais et al., 2014, p. 43).

46 A mão tremia-LHE (EP) ‘His hand trembled’ (Lamiroy, 2001, p. 109)

47 A mão DELE tremia (BP/EP) ‘His hand trembled’ (Lamiroy, 2001, p. 109)

In particular, contemporary BP avoids the 3<sup>rd</sup> person dative PR and even though the construction is still sometimes attested with the other grammatical persons, it persists mostly in somewhat fossilized/idiomatic expressions (48 and 49) (much like

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<sup>10</sup> The dative pronoun in examples 44 and 45 can actually also be interpreted as marking origin (see section 2.2.1 for more information).

in French) and, in our own impressionistic opinion, with body-part PMs<sup>11</sup> (50). In written BP, the dative EPC is usually indicative of formal or literary speech, in which it survives thanks to influence and prestige of the Lusitanizing norm.

48 Então não ME enche o saco (BP) ‘So don’t fill my bag’ → ‘So don’t bother me’ (O Fuxico, 2016)

49 TE estouro os zóio [sic] (BP) ‘I’ll blow your eyes out’ (my father<sup>12</sup>)

50 ME pirou o cabeça (BP) ‘Made my big head go crazy’ (O Surto, A Cera, 2000)

Interestingly, the periphrastic genitive construction mentioned earlier is simply another case of internal possession (Morais et al., 2014, p. 32). *Dele(s)* or *dela(s)* also specifies the gender and the number of the possessor, while *seu*, like its Romance counterparts, tells us the gender and the number of the head noun (Morais et al., 2014, pp. 18-19).

51 O José lavou-LHE o carro (EP) ‘Joseph washed his/her car’ (his/her: the neighbor’s)

52 O José lavou o carro DELA (BP/EP) ‘Joseph washed the car of hers’ → ‘Joseph washed her car’ (her: the neighbor’s)

Furthermore, note that example 53 (where *seu* specifically replaces ‘the neighbor’) is agrammatical in spoken BP, partly maybe because the 3<sup>rd</sup> person possessive is generally co-referent with the 2<sup>nd</sup> person in BP<sup>13</sup>. In other words, this sentence would only be accepted in Brazil if *seu* referred to the speaker’s interlocutor. One reason for that might be that BP has generalized the use of *você(s)* to refer to the

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<sup>11</sup> Diatopic and interspeaker variation, which is beyond the scope of this paper, may also be important factors here. A 24-year-old, born and raised in Mato Grosso, I never use the 3<sup>rd</sup> person dative pronoun *lhe*, neither as an indirect object nor as an external possessor, except if it is part of a song lyric (and I have been speaking French – where dative IOs are a given – for over ten years). But Brazil is a big country: some places (like Bahia, in the North-east) use *lhe* regularly (often as a semantic 2<sup>nd</sup> person or as an accusative, it is true), so maybe there is an impact on dative possession, too.

<sup>12</sup> He was kidding and he wasn’t talking to me, of course.

<sup>13</sup> Another hypothesis put forward by Moraes et al. (2014, p. 19-20) is that *seu* specializes in quantified or generic antecedents while *dele* prefers referential antecedents: “acho que a televisão brasileira ... irá encontrar *seu* caminho” and “... foi a primeira peça que o Ziembinski apresentou em toda a vida *dele* na carreira dele ...” (those are examples taken from the NURC – Norma urbana oral culta – corpus).

2<sup>nd</sup> person. *Você* comes from an old form of address, *vossa mercê* ('your mercy'), which has undergone extensive grammaticalization. As with all forms of address, *vossa mercê* and *você* require the verb to be conjugated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person. This situation has favored syncretism in BP's pronominal system, notably the fact that the 3<sup>rd</sup> person possessive *seu(s)/sua(s)* may also refer (as it often does, except in formal written BP) to the 2<sup>nd</sup> person (as I mentioned above), so spoken BP may try to solve the ambiguity by simply removing the 3<sup>rd</sup> person interpretation of *seu* and implementing *dele* instead. That means that even regular internal possession is sometimes restricted in BP.

53 O José lavou o SEU carro (\*BP, EP) 'Joseph washed his/her car' (his/her: the neighbor's)

What could possibly explain the gap between BP and EP? Van de Velde et al. (2016) claim that the reason why Spanish, Italian and French behave differently might be the emergence of specialized slots for determination and modification in the NP (i.e. the development of tight-structured NPs), which can be seen through the rise of definite articles and the loss of the external possessor (remember that EPCs express the possessor as an argument of the verb, outside the possessive NP). It might be interesting, then, to see if their hypothesis applies to Portuguese, too.

In particular, the authors observed that there seems to be a direct correlation between the grammaticalization of the article and the loss of the external possessor. Indeed, Spanish can license NP ellipsis with nominal possessors (54) but French and Italian can't and opt for the demonstrative instead (see 55 and 56). Moreover, the possessive pronoun behaves like a determiner in French, but more like an adjective in Spanish and Italian (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 29). One can see that by the fact that the French possessive pronoun cannot be combined with another determiner (57) (Spanish actually has two different paradigms, one that allows it (59) and another that doesn't (60), and Italian is perfectly fine with it (58)).

The least grammaticalized possessive paradigm is the Italian, because it is still highly adjectival. In Spanish, the possessive paradigm holds an intermediate position between these two languages in that it has a double system: a clitic determiner similar to the French, which is in an advanced stage on the



grammaticalization scale, and a strong possessive, very similar to the Italian, which is less grammaticalized (Van Peteghem, 2012, p. 631).

54 El coche de Juan 'John's car' / El de Juan (SP.) 'The of John' → 'That of John's' (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 28)

55 La voiture de Jean 'John's car' / \*La de Jean (FR.) \*'The of John' → Celle de Jean: 'That of John's' (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 28)

56 La macchina di Gianni 'John's car' / \*La di Gianni (IT.) \*'The of John' → 'That of John's' (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 28)

57 (\*Ce/\*le) mon livre (FR.) '(\*This/the) my book' (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 29)

58 Il mio libro (IT.) 'My book' (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 29)

59 El libro mío (SP.) 'My book' (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 29)

60 \*El mi libro (SP.) 'My book' (our example)

Another relevant phenomenon is the grammaticalization of the partitive article. Indeed, the so-called French partitive article has grammaticalized further than its Romance counterparts<sup>14</sup> in which it actually behaves as an indefinite for non-count nouns (61), plural count nouns (63) and even abstract nouns (64) (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 28; Carlier, From preposition to article: The grammaticalization of the French partitive, 2007, p. 2). Italian, for example, still preserves some of partitive (i.e. extractive) meaning of the article (compare 65 and 66) even if it did extend its scope to abstract nouns (67) (Carlier et al., 2010, p. 9). Finally, Old Spanish used to be able to express partition with *de*, but even then it did not include cases in which there was not a contextually defined partition set. It has never derived an indefinite reading from the original prepositional partitive construction, either. In other words, Spanish did not develop a full-fledged partitive article (68-69) (Carlier et al., 2010, pp. 2-3, 7-8; Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 28).

61 Je mange du riz (FR.) 'I eat rice' (Carlier, 2007, p. 2)

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<sup>14</sup> For a detailed account of the grammaticalization process of the partitive from Latin to the modern Romance languages, see Carlier et al. (2010).

- 62 Je vois un chat (FR.) 'I see a cat' (Carlier, 2007, p. 2)
- 63 Je vois des chats (FR.) 'I see cats' (Carlier, 2007, p. 2)
- 64 Il a fait ça avec de l'amour (FR.) 'He did it with love' (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 28)
- 65 Piero beve dell'acqua (IT.) 'Peter drinks some water' (Carlier et al., 2010, p. 9)
- 66 Piero beve acqua (IT.) 'Peter (usually) drinks water' (Carlier et al., 2010, p. 9)
- 67 Bisogna avere della pazienza (IT.) 'One needs to have patience' (Carlier et al., 2010, p. 9)
- 68 \*Pedro come del pan (SP.) 'Peter eats bread' (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 29)
- 69 Pedro come pan (SP.) 'Peter eats bread' (Van de Velde et al., 2016, p. 29)

Let us take a look at the situation in Portuguese, now. It is true that BP possessive pronouns appear to have a hybrid status between adjectives and determiners. Indeed, despite the fact that BP possessives can license an NP by themselves (like determiners), they can still combine with an article (like adjectives) (Van Peteghem, 2012, p. 608). As a result, for instance, Brazilians are able to drop or to use an article before the possessive pronoun, while EP speakers have to have it (see examples 70-72). It turns out that EP possessive pronouns show prototypical adjectival behavior (they occur as prenominal or postnominal attributes or as predicates – Van Peteghem (2012, p. 608)), and are thus less grammaticalized than BP's "determiners"<sup>15</sup>.

- 70 Pensando bem, a verdade é que Ø MEU trabalho é brincar o dia todo. (BP, \*EP)  
'Come to think of it, the truth is that my job is to play all day' (Catraca Livre, 2015)
- 71 O único padrão que detecto é que o MEU trabalho é sobretudo mental [...] (EP) 'The only pattern I detect is that my work is mostly mental [...]' (Jornal de Notícias, 2016)

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<sup>15</sup> Interestingly, dropping the article in written BP is perceived by us as an educated feature (and they usually stem from EP speech patterns, perpetuated by a prescriptive norm that emulates classic literary models). That hunch is somewhat confirmed by Spanoghe's (2001, p. 231) claim that "Brazilian authors with a solid education and living in large towns do respect the tendency of omitting the definite article before the possessive form", or at least that is the case in her 2,700 item database.

72 A única diferença de mim para as outras pessoas é que o MEU trabalho tem muita exposição. (BP) ‘The only difference between me and the other people is that my work has a lot of exposure’ (Diário de São Paulo, 2016)

Nevertheless, let us not forget that Portuguese allows NP ellipsis with nominal possessors (like Spanish but unlike French or Italian) and that that is true of the Brazilian and of the European varieties (73). In addition, both BP and EP do not have a partitive article (74-75).

73 O carro do João ‘John’s car’ / O do João (PT.) ‘The of John’ → ‘That of John’s’

74 \*Ele come do pão<sup>16</sup> (PT.) ‘He eats bread’ (our example)

75 Ele come pão (PT.) ‘He eats bread’ (our example)

Considering that spoken BP has entirely replaced dative PRs with a prepositional IP construction, we have decided to look at another possible explanation for the differences between BP and EP besides greater NP configurationality in BP: clitic use<sup>17</sup>.

We have seen that clitic pronouns are at the very core of external possession as they can encode the possessor in the Romance languages. However, while EP has kept a rich and complex pronominal system, BP has practically lost its 3<sup>rd</sup> person object pronouns (Galves, 1997). We will focus on those for the moment.

On the one hand, BP usually replaces the 3<sup>rd</sup> person accusative clitic (76) with a full NP (77), a tonic subject pronoun (78) or even with a null object (79).

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<sup>16</sup> We were able to find some internet examples of this sentence, but they were all found in religious (thus archaic) contexts.

<sup>17</sup> Not everybody agrees that Romance object pronouns are clitics. The canonical definition states, among other things, that clitics are ‘promiscuous’ (i.e. they can attach to any grammatical category) but Romance object pronouns, like affixes, can only attach to one type of host: here, it is the verb (Spencer et al., 2012, p. 65). That being said, the discussion about the real status of object pronouns in the Romance languages is not essential to the present study. As a result, we will continue to use the term ‘clitic’ as a synonym of ‘object pronoun’ throughout this paper.

*Você viu o João?* ('Have you seen John?')

76 Eu vi-o (\*BP, EP) 'I saw him'

77 Eu vi o João (BP, EP) 'I saw John'

78 Eu vi ele (BP, \*EP) 'I saw he' → 'I saw him'

79 Eu vi Ø (BP, \*EP) 'I saw' → 'I saw him'

On the other hand, BP also often uses a prepositional phrase (introduced by *a* but mostly by *para*) instead of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person dative clitic with ditransitive verbs (compare 80 and 81) and the genitive construction with transitive verbs, especially action and process verbs<sup>18</sup> (see example 47 again) (Morais et al., 2014, pp. 31-32). The first dative is a regular indirect object and the second is a dative PR. Finally, there is always the question of how the syncretism in BP's pronominal system affects the choice of the possessive form, whether it is *seu*, *dele* or the dative PR *lhe*. Indeed, *você* is the widespread 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronoun in Brazil (*tu* is restricted to some regions of the country), so, without context, there is great ambiguity between the 3<sup>rd</sup> person and the 2<sup>nd</sup> person readings of *lhe* (see example 53 again).

80 O João enviou-LHE uma carta de amor (?BP, EP) 'John sent him/her a love letter' (Morais et al., pp. 31-32)

81 O João enviou uma carta de amor para ela (BP, ?EP) 'John sent a love letter to her' → 'John sent him/her a love letter' (Morais et al., pp. 31-32)

Finally, there is also evidence that 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitic pronouns are not part of the Brazilian vernacular but rather a product of school education as they're absent from the speech of uneducated children (Azevedo, 1989, p. 864; Nunes, 1993, p. 207; Pagotto, 1993, p. 187). That means that the 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitic is only ever present in educated speech<sup>19</sup>, and especially in the written register – and we could say the same about the

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<sup>18</sup> Moraes et al. (2014, p. 32) actually say that "in the context of dynamic transitive verbs, among them, *beijar*, *lavar*, *levantar*, *operar*, *pentear*, and of stative verbs, among them, *admirar*, *elogiar*, *interpretar*, *invejar*". We have considered the latter to be process verbs as they clearly denote a mental process of which the subject is the EXPERIENCER.

<sup>19</sup> Which means that it is absent from standard spoken BP, with the caveat that there might be geographic variation across Brazil (see note 11 again).

3<sup>rd</sup> person dative PR. In other words, even though clitic usage does not fully explain the absence of dative PRs in BP, we believe it might have at least sped up the process in some contexts, namely with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitic.

# Empirical study

## 1 The issue

Brazilian prescriptive norm is still heavily influenced by EP syntax, which has enjoyed nearly indisputable prestige in Brazil for centuries. It seems, in fact, that Brazilian educated speakers are constantly torn between what sounds natural and what sounds prestigious, especially when they're writing (Azevedo, 1989, p. 862). Indeed, Brazilian vernacular is widely adopted by all social classes but some of its features lack prestige. EP embodies the idealized standard perpetuated by an educational system that fails to teach it effectively to all Brazilians, to whom the norm is sometimes so unnatural that parts of it never even reach educated oral speech<sup>20</sup> (Mattos e Silva, 2004, pp. 38-42).

Even today, when Brazilian authors are no longer supposed to be subjected to linguistic purism (a feat made possible with the arrival of the modernist movement in 1922), the norm continues to influence writers to different extents (Teyssier, 1980, p. 166), making it very difficult to describe Brazil's literary language and educated written language in general. Nonetheless, it is imperative that we try to do it using corpus data so we can try to map out the linguistic factors underlying the choices of Brazilian educated speakers. One of the main benefits of doing so would be proposing an alternative norm that is closer to the speakers' natural choices.

Indeed, we do not think that it would suffice to simply transpose the rules of the vernacular to the school books, as speakers' choices are governed by a series of complex (extra-)linguistic factors. For instance, it is extremely difficult for me not to postpone the 3<sup>rd</sup> person accusative clitic when I am writing a paper (e.g. *para amá-lo*), even though that is a construction I would never use orally, even in a formal setting. However, with other grammatical persons, I am comfortable using proclisis (e.g. *para me amar*). It seems, then, that BP pronominal clitics have a different distribution according to the person, whereas placement rules in EP are the same for all of them (Galves, 1997, pp. 13, 19; Nunes, 1993, pp. 207, 219). Imposing proclisis in all contexts

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<sup>20</sup> Which also characterizes covert prestige.

would only mean overriding another subtlety of the language, even if the general tendency does prove that the alternation between proclisis and enclisis in written BP relies mainly on stylistic rather than syntactic factors (as the numerous cases of hypercorrection – i.e. occurrences of enclisis when the norm specifically asks for proclisis – show us).

With that in mind, we have decided to study dative possession in written BP using corpora from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The underlying interests are many and varied; they include the study of variation in Portuguese across space (BP *vs* EP), across channels of transmission (written BP *vs* spoken BP), across registers (high or literary *vs* low) and across time (19<sup>th</sup> century BP *vs* contemporary BP). This article is also the first step to try to describe the differences between BP and EP with respect to the dative PR and to try to situate Portuguese effectively in the broader Romance context. Hopefully, the data we have gathered here will be useful to investigate in the future the traces of the competition between the Brazilian vernacular and the norm in the written language. It could also help us measure the differences between 19<sup>th</sup> century, pre-modernist literary BP and the works of contemporary authors who have earned the right to write in “Brazilian style” (Teyssier, 1980, p. 116).

More concretely, we will examine the productivity of dative PRs in the corpus, as well as the type of the PMs (body parts, kinship terms, various possessed objects) and their grammatical relation (subject, DO, PP). We will also pay attention to the animacy of the referent (human, animal, inanimate) and how affected it is by the event denoted by the verb. Finally, we will see if there are any significant differences between the language of the narrative and the language of the dialogue. Indeed, the books we have chosen contain regionalist tales that try to reproduce or imitate the language of the people (Teyssier, 1980, p. 114). However, those efforts are often restricted to the narrative, as only the modernist revolution in 1922 was able to break off the shackles of purism, a whole century after the independence of Brazil.

## 2 Methods

In order to carry this research, we have used a corpus of 682 sentences containing a 3<sup>rd</sup> person dative clitic pronoun. They were extracted from three collections of Brazilian regionalist tales from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century:

- *Contos amazônicos* (CA) (1893) by Inglês de Sousa (1853-1918),
- *Pelo sertão* (PS) (1898) by Afonso Arinos (1868-1916) and
- *Os caboclos* (OC) (published in 1920 but written between 1897 and 1906) by Valdomiro Silveira (1873-1941)<sup>21</sup>

Each of these 682 occurrences was annotated<sup>22</sup> according to the criteria below (the reader will find a detailed description of them in the sections to follow):

- Type of pronoun: 3<sup>rd</sup> person dative clitic (singular (*lhe*), plural (*lhes*) and even fused with the accusative pronoun (*lho*, *lha*))
- Status of the dative pronoun: lexical (i.e. licensed by the argument frame of the verb, e.g. indirect objects) and non-lexical (here, dative PRs and datives of interest)
- Animacy of the referent of the dative pronoun: [+HUMAN], [-HUMAN/+ANIMATE] (animals) and [-HUMAN/-ANIMATE] (plants and inanimate objects)
- Type of possessum (PM): body parts and biological processes; mental processes, feelings and actions; kinship terms; part-whole relationships; possessed items; spatial relations
- Grammatical relation of the possessum (PM): subject, direct object (DO) or oblique (PP)
- Affectedness of the possessor (PR): physically affected, mentally affected or not affected at all
- Modality of enunciation: narrative and dialogue

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<sup>21</sup> We have used *Pelo sertão*'s and *Os caboclos*' first edition so the original spelling was maintained.

<sup>22</sup> We have compiled the corpus and analyzed the data using Microsoft Access. The file is available at <http://934.be/manama/dative-corpus.accdb>.



## 2.1 The corpus

There are many reasons why we have chosen *Contos amazônicos*, *Os caboclos* and *Pelo sertão*. The first was that we wanted to study the literary language of the 19th century. Indeed, not only does the 19th century mark a turning point in Brazilian history (notably with the Independence in 1822 and the Paraguayan war from 1864 to 1870<sup>23</sup>), it is also at that time that EP's enclitic model becomes the norm and reaches educated classes in Brazil, where it competes with the native vernacular<sup>24</sup> (Pagotto et al., 2005, pp. 67-68).

The second reason was that pre-modernist regionalism is vastly underrated and overlooked, all because it stands between two major artistic movements: Romanticism and Modernism. In fact, regionalism, a genre that would reach its peak during the second wave of Modernism, emerges within the Romantic Movement, which portrays Brazil and its people in a highly idealized way. By the end of the 19th century, however, the regionalist topic adopts a more unbiased approach by trying to depict accurately the language and the customs from around the country (often with a significant documental effort<sup>25</sup>) and that is why it is said to prefigure Modernism (Bosi, 1966, p. 57; Silveira C., 2012, pp. 21-27).

That being said, even though regionalist writers “often imitate the coarse language of the people” and their tales are “filled with brazilianisms” (Teyssier 1980: 114), each one of them does it in a different way (Bosi, 1966, p. 13): for example, Inglês de Sousa and Afonso Arinos mostly only use brazilianisms in the dialogues, while Valdomiro Silveira incorporates popular syntax and lexicon into the narrative.

Finally, although our authors have led similar lives (born to wealthy families and raised away from the big city, where they were first acquainted with their native

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<sup>23</sup> The Paraguayan war is explicitly mentioned in CA's *Voluntário*: “Quem não sabe o efeito produzido à beira do rio pela notícia da declaração da guerra entre o Brasil e o Paraguai? [...] Falava-se de Francisco Solano López nos serões do interior da província como de um monstro devorador de carne humana, de um tigre incapaz de um sentimento humanitário” (p. 20).

<sup>24</sup> That means that the current European model for clitic placement is a rather recent development in the diachrony of Portuguese. It is true, however, that contemporary EP resembles 13th century Portuguese (in which the pronoun was usually postposed to the verb and anteposition was triggered by pretty much the same factors as in today's EP) (see Martins (1994)).

<sup>25</sup> See the exhaustive glossary at the end of *Os caboclos*, for instance.

dialect, only to leave later in order to pursue higher education<sup>26</sup>), they come from different parts of Brazil, and their tales are always set in their home region: Sousa is from Pará, Arinos from Minas Gerais and Silveira from the state of São Paulo.

Of course, there is also the question of the intrinsic literary value of these works and the ability of the authors to conjugate the best of both worlds: namely, their country roots and their educated upbringing. Masterfully, they tackle themes such as respect of tradition and religion in tales shrouded in an aura of mystery and superstition, all of it symptomatic of the ignorance of the people, especially those living in secluded areas<sup>27</sup>. Their naivety translates alternatively into fear or reverence of a supernatural power they are not meant to understand but that they know they should not offend.

It is not surprising to those familiar to the Brazilian religious landscape that syncretism is so overwhelmingly present throughout the tales. Indeed, despite being Christian, the characters give utmost credit to stories of human transfiguration, witches, ghosts and bad omens (*A feiticeira* and *Acauã* in CA, *Avinha* in OC, *Assombramento* in PS). Moreover, the tales showcase scenes of everyday life in those forgotten corners of Brazil so well that we still get attached to the characters and are moved by their fate, despite the stories being short (after all, they are telling *causos*). Love (*As frutas* or *Hora quieta* in OC), jealousy (*A Esteireira* in PS), nostalgia (*A Cadeirinha* in PS), honor and injustice (*Voluntário* in CA, *Anna Cabriuvana* and *Historia antiga* in OC): these are some of the recurring themes in the tales. What they have in common is that they cover all aspects of human nature, good or evil, but almost always in the same matter-of-fact, observational tone.

Indeed, with the occasional exception of Sousa, who explicitly condemns the oppression against the poor in some stories, the authors do not seem to want to judge

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<sup>26</sup> Some of Sousa's narrators in CA share a similar life story. In *O Rebelde*, for example, the narrator tells us that he had to "seguir para o seminário no Pará [...] [e dali o] mandaram para Olinda, para cursar a academia de Direito".

<sup>27</sup> One example is OC's *Camunhengue*, in which the main character – who has leprosy – is gradually ostracized by his friends and family until he has to leave them completely because his only hope of a cure – the preposterous advice of a healer – didn't work out.

or criticize the world they are transposing onto paper but merely to depict it as truthfully as possible<sup>28</sup>.

Finally, each tale forms an individual unit and can be read separately (even though there is some intertextuality in Sousa<sup>29</sup>). In total, I have extracted 254 sentences from Sousa, 284 from Silveira and 144 from Arinos (those were all the occurrences of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person dative in the whole of the books).

## 2.2 Selection criteria and results

### 2.2.1 Type and status of the dative clitic

We have transcribed 682 sentences containing a 3<sup>rd</sup> person dative pronoun, including cases in which the morphological third person actually referred to the second person *você(s)* (82, 84); the dative and the accusative were fused together (85-86); and the dative seemed to replace the accusative pronoun (*lheísmo*) (83-84).

There were 254 dative occurrences in Sousa's CA, 284 in Silveira's OC and only 144 in Arinos' PS<sup>30</sup>. Out of these 682 examples, 339 (49,7%) contained lexical datives; 312 (45,7%) dative PRs; 12 (1,8%) were datives of interest<sup>31</sup> and 19 (2,8%) were ambiguous cases (i.e. lexical/PR, especially with verbs like *partir* or *tirar*, where *lhe* may also mark origin<sup>32</sup>, or interest/PR). This shows us that external possession is still very productive within the dative in our corpus. There is also no significant difference between the authors<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> The result can be all the more heartbreaking (and even downright shocking) to modern readers whose sensibilities have (thankfully) shifted when dealing with problematic matters such as animal cruelty (*Desespero de amor* in OC), racism (*A cadeirinha*, *A Esteireira* and *Pedro Barqueiro* in PS) and antisemitism (*O baile do Judeu* in CA).

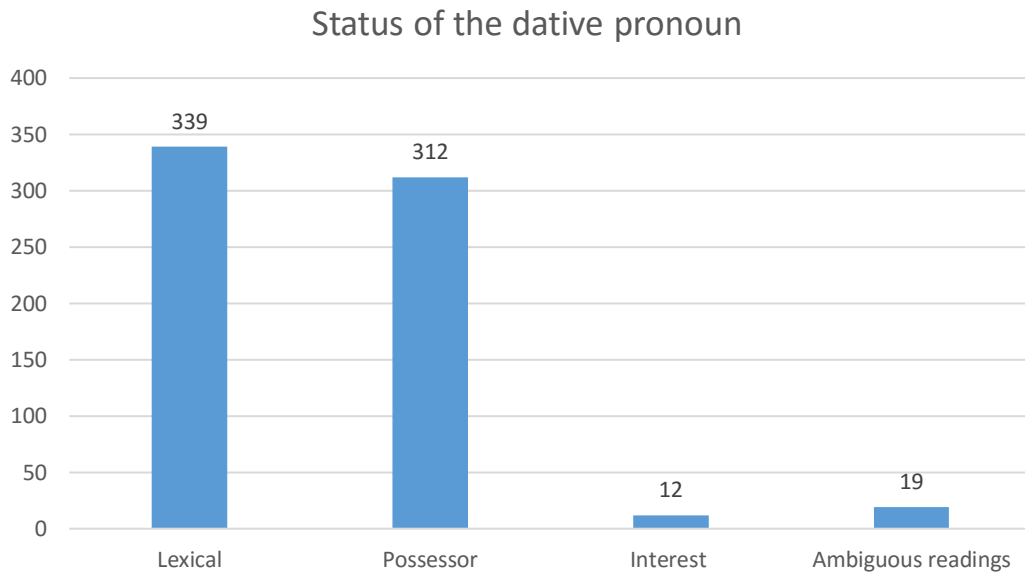
<sup>29</sup> For example, a character named Estêvão narrates *A feiticeira*, but he is also mentioned at the beginning of *Amor de Maria*. Later on in the book, a character named Jacó Patacho is mentioned in two different tales (*A quadrilha de Jacó Patacho* and *O Rebelde*).

<sup>30</sup> As this is the first step in our attempt to understand dative possession in written BP, we have decided to concentrate now on how the construction works when it occurs. However, in the future, we will try to calculate how frequent the dative is compared to the other available PP alternatives (*Eu dei-LHE um doce* → *Eu dei um doce para ele*; *Eu lavei-LHE o carro* → *Eu lavei o carro dele*).

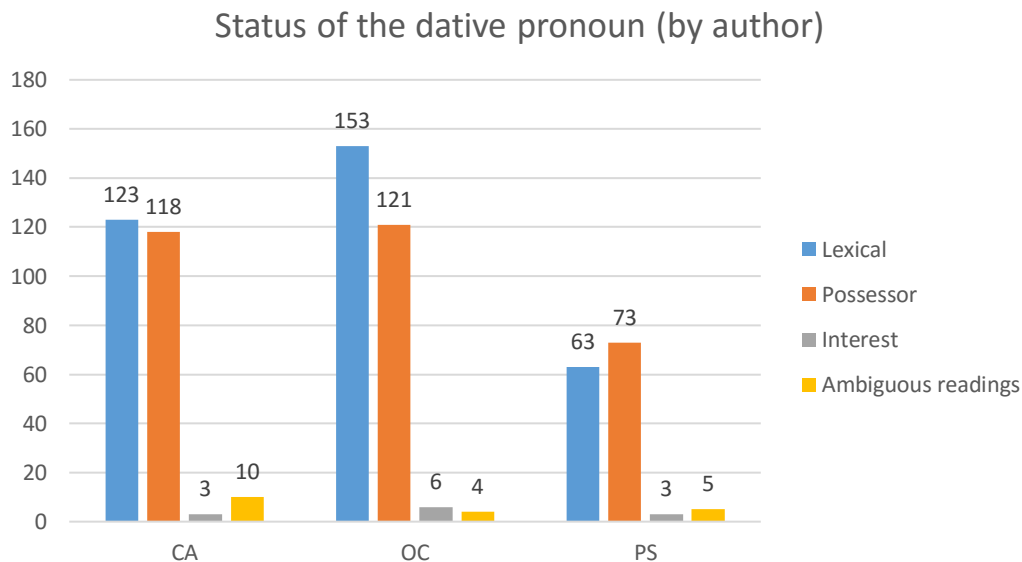
<sup>31</sup> The term 'dative of interest' designates the construction whereby the referent of the pronoun, while not part of the process denoted by the verb, is affected by it in some way (negatively or positively): *Il me construit une table* (FR.) (Lamiroy, 2001, p. 102).

<sup>32</sup> See Moraes & Ribeiro (2014, p. 41) for more examples.

<sup>33</sup>  $\chi^2 = 3.462$ ;  $df = 2$ ;  $p = 0.177$  for the observed frequencies of lexical and possessor datives.



Graph 1: Status of the dative pronoun



Graph 2: Status of the dative pronoun (by author)

82 Si não, LHE afianço que home' nem um não era capaz de berrar mais grosso do que eu! (dial.) (OC, p. 38)

83 Também quem LHE mandara sair à caça em sexta-feira? (narr.) (CA, p. 53)

84 Ora viva, que ninguém agora cansa os olhos em LHE ver! (dial.) (OC, p. 181)

85 Um dia que matara um [leitãozinho] de brinco, e sa Januaria LH'O censurava entristecida, elle respondeu rindo num riso rasgado e amargo: [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 82)

86 A Anna Triste, ahi, tirou a mão da gaveta, com os dois gatilhos de uma Laporte arreganhados, e apontou-LH'A á bocca do estomago [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 39)

#### Lexical datives

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87 Como LHE falassem muitas vezes da Maria Mucoim, [...] mostrava grande curiosidade de a conhecer. (narr.) (CA, p. 33)

88 Isso de você pensar que não acha quem LHE queira [...] é bobage da marca maior! (dial.) (OC, p. 1)

89 Deus permitta que nada LHE aconteça. (dial.) (PS, p. 15)

90 Lourenço perguntou o motivo da tristeza que todos LHE notavam, foi terno, solícito e amante. (narr.) (CA, p. 47)

91 [mas o tinhoso falou na alma de meu companheiro que, sem mais aquela, atirou o laço e segurou os cornos da vaca] E eu, para não parecer que receava o lance, botei-LHE a minha corda também. (dial.) (CA, p. 73)

92 Diz que elle enjoou duma vez da mulher, e socou-LHE os pés<sup>34</sup>. (dial.) (OC, p. 115)

93 Por que razão não LHES atira a Paulina [na vara de quatis]? (narr.) (OC, p. 129)

94 [...] quando a Romana [...] chegou a passo e passo, depois de acenar-LHE, e encaminhou-se para casa outra vez [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 63)

#### Dative possessors

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95 Os jovens tapuios tremiam só de ouvir-LHE o nome [...] (narr.) (CA, p. 20)

96 Ella reparou-LHE então nas orelhas, que se haviam tornado intensamente escarlates [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 81)

97 Cercava-LHE o pescoço um collar grosseiro [...] (narr.) (PS, p. 67)

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<sup>34</sup> This sentence means that he 'kicked her out' (literally, 'he put his feet on her'), not that he 'put her feet'.

98 O dia seguinte era de trabalho e convinha levantar cedo para ir em busca da Pequena e mais da Malhada, duas vacas que LHE haviam desaparecido naquele dia. (narr.) (CA, p. 85)

99 O Zeca Estevo mandou que o Candinho LHE ensilhasse a besta picaça quatrólha, ûa mula velhaca e arengueira, para dar uma volta nos arredores. (narr.) (OC, p. 83)

100[...]; depois, pareceu a José Paulista que o Venancio lhe fazia um aceno: "apanhasse-LHE o chapéo." (narr.) (PS, p. 40)

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Ambiguous readings: lexical or DP

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101 Pois sonegava-as devéras, dêz que percebeu que elle por força queria pegar-lhe nas mãos e dar-LHE um beijo na bocca: [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 51)

102 O Chico Lucas, a principio, quer tomar-LHE a espingarda. Mas toma-lh'a? Qual nada! (narr.) (OC, p. 129)

103 O Eduardo Inglês, no seu sítio da outra banda, não se julgava seguro da vida, com medo do José do Monte, que prometera tirar-LHE o cacaua por demanda. (narr.) (CA, p. 61)

104 Sai em corrida disparada para o logar onde o tigre se havia entocado; não o alcançou, porém, que uma apoplexia LHE arrancou a vida no cumprimento do dever. (narr.) (CA, p. 61)

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Ambiguous readings: dative of interest or DP

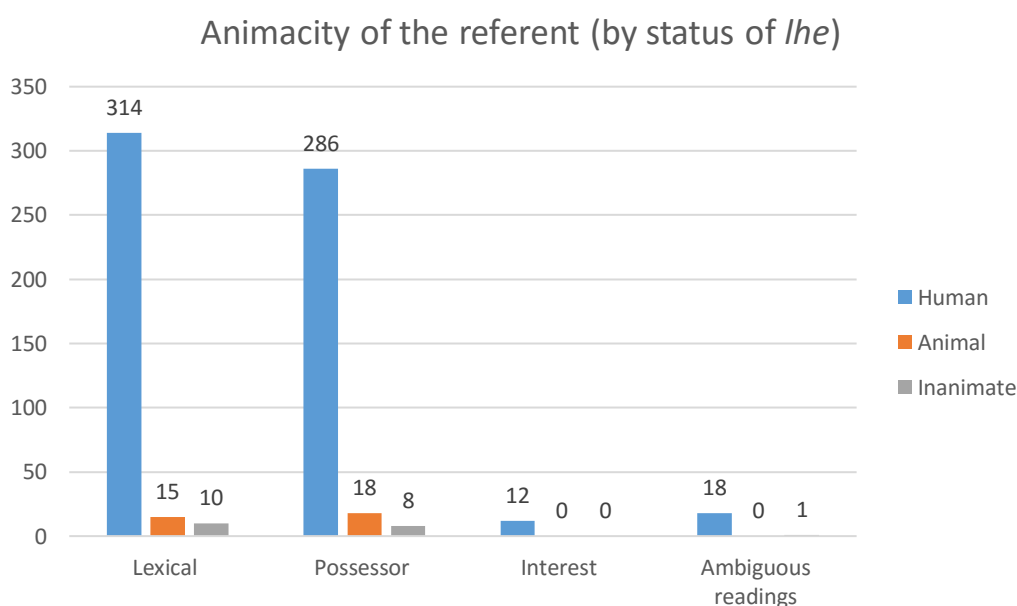
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105 [...] e finalizou entregando-me um embrulho com dinheiro, duzentos e poucos mil réis, tudo quanto tinha, para que LHE livrasse o filho de jurar bandeira. (narr.) (CA, p. 26)

106 Criado em meio desse labutar, [...] captára Manuel Lucio Paes a inteira confiança do guarda-mór; administrava-LHE a fazenda com dedicação [...] (narr.) (PS, p. 89)

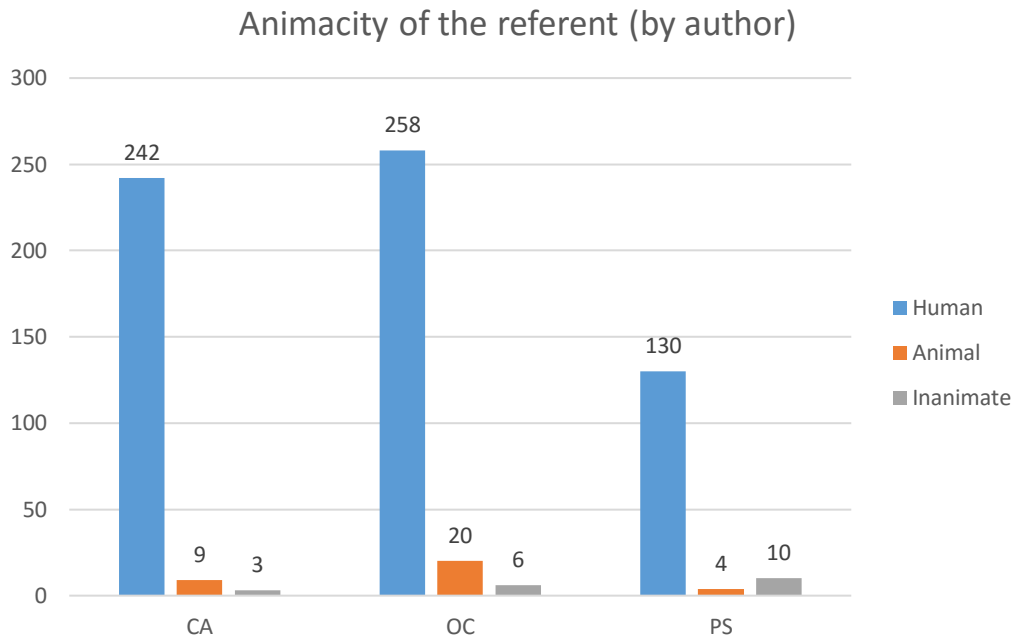
## 2.2.2 Animacy of the referent

Cross-linguistically, external possessors are generally “animate, human and ego” (Payne & Barshi, 1999, p. 14) and Haspelmath (1999, pp. 113-114) has confirmed this tendency in European languages, too. The same applies to our corpus: out of 312 unambiguous occurrences of the DP, 286 (91,67%) referred to a [+HUMAN] possessor and only 26 (8,33%) to a [-HUMAN] one. This is not actually very surprising, as the majority of 3<sup>rd</sup> person lexical datives also select a [+HUMAN] referent<sup>35</sup>. More interesting, perhaps, is the fact that our corpus allows animal and inanimate (i.e. plants and objects) referents, including possessors, which French and Italian forbid.



Graph 3: Animacy of the referent (by status of the dative clitic)

<sup>35</sup> Van Peteghem (2001, p. 153) made the same observation for French.



Graph 4: Animacity of the referent (by author)

#### Human referent/possessor

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107 Venha cá, meu filho, quero-LHE dizer uma coisa. (dial.) (OC, p. 83)

108 A feiticeira não parecia dar pela presença do moço que LHE bateu familiarmente no ombro. (narr.) (CA, p. 37)

#### Animal referent/possessor

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109 À sombra de cajueiros folhudos, matizados de encarnado, chora a juruti solitária, e responde-LHE a gargalhada zombeteira da maritacaca. (narr.) (CA, p. 44)

110 Sentou-se encostado na mula, e começou a alisar-LHE a crina, como num carinho: [...]. (narr.) (OC, p. 57)

#### Inanimate referent/possessor

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111 Vou vivendo a minha vida, feito um barrote pesado, que desce p'ro rio abaixo, na força das águas, sem nada que LHE segure... (dial.) (OC, p. 30)

112 [...] outro, correndo do campo com um molho de arnica, pisava a planta por extrahir-LHE o succo. (narr.) (PS, p. 42)



### 2.2.3 Type of possessum

In studies like this one, it is common to distinguish between ‘inalienable’ and ‘alienable’ possession. Indeed, inalienable possession is thought to show a “tighter structural bond” between PM and PR (Heine, 1997, p. 172), making any outward morphological marking redundant in some languages or at least giving it some sort of differential treatment in others. For instance, French only allows body part PMs in dative EPCs, and Dahl et al. (2001, p. 208) tell us that “[it] is a well-known fact that kin terms and body part terms (*head, foot, stomach* etc.) are the two semantic classes of nouns that are most often treated as “inalienable” whenever alienability distinctions are made.”

That being said, the concept of inalienability is known to vary cross-culturally and cross-linguistically<sup>36</sup>. If inalienability is a requirement for dative possession, then kinship terms are both inalienable in Spanish and alienable in French, as they cannot trigger DPs in the latter. Where should we draw a line? We have thus opted for a more detailed labeling system:

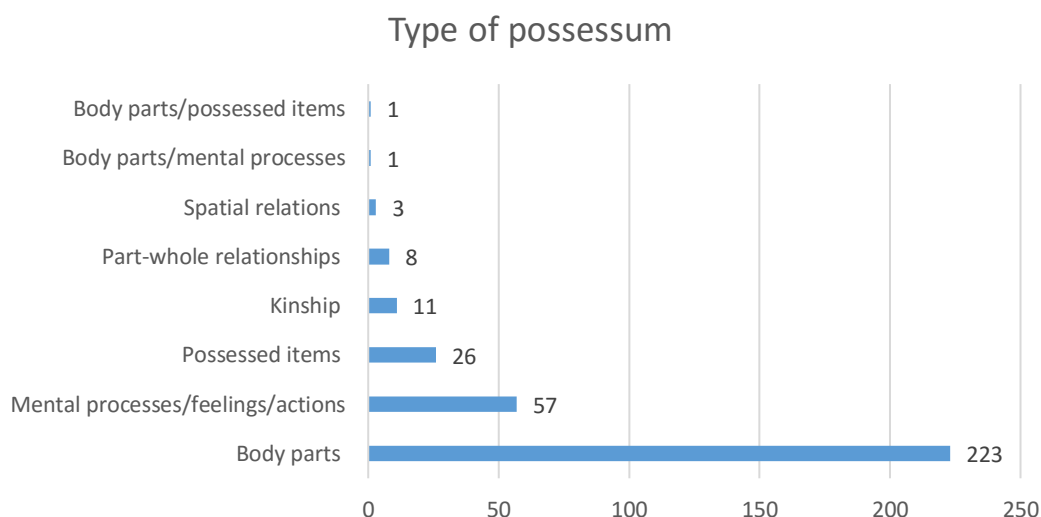
- Body parts (*braços, olhos,...*)/biological processes (*inchão, ferida, vida,...*)
- Part-whole relationships (e.g. the branches of a tree)
- “Abstract human faculties” (Van Peteghem, *Datif possessif et inaliénabilité en français, en roumain et en russe*, 2001, p. 152) (*atenção*)/feelings (*fúria*)/actions (*marcha*) and results of these actions (*falar* → *palavras*)
- Kinship terms (mostly family – *filho, marido* – but also friends and peers)
- Possessed items (can be something concrete, like *camisa*, or abstract, like *nome*)
- Spatial relations (but only if they could be paraphrased by the possessive pronoun)

In our corpus, the possessum was a body part in 223 cases out of 330, which accounts for 67,58% of all DPs (including the ambiguous readings). Next come mental processes (17,27%), possessed items (7,88%), kinship terms (3,33%), part-whole relationships (2,42%) and spatial relations (0,91%). It is apparent from the data shown here that the possessor’s inherent attributes are overrepresented in the corpus, and we

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<sup>36</sup> See also Heine (1997, p. 172), Morais et al. (2014, p. 29) and Payne et al. (1999b, p. 14).

have established that written BP accepts kinship PMs; but we can also see that extrinsic possessed elements are attested in all authors. Some of them (7 out of 26) were clothes or items adjacent to the body (so they could, by extension, be considered a body part), but others, like *casa*, *janela* or *tempo* were not.



Graph 5: Type of possessum

#### Body parts/biological processes

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113 E as proezas pacíficas do filho da velha Rosa enchiam-LHE o coração de inveja.  
(narr.) (CA, p. 22)

114 [...] e concluiu falando em Maria Magdalena, que lavára os pés de Nosso Senhor Jesus Christo com cheiros caros, e depois LHE passára pelos pés, como uma toalha, a rica trança de cabellos pretos. (narr.) (OC, p. 108)

115 De vez em quando, parecia-lhe que uma cousa LHE arrepellava os cabellos [...] (narr.) (PS, p. 25)

116 O Inácio cortou-lhe as cordas, lavou-LHE a ferida com água avinagrada e teve de empregar a força para obrigá-la a deitar-se, pois ardia em febre. (narr.) (CA, p. 26)

117 Mas agora, áquella hora duvidosa do lusco-fusco, naquelle ermo, um irreprimivel pavor se LHE foi apoderando pouco a pouco do espirito, á medida que o morador da tapera lhe respondia á salvação e lhe perguntava pela saúde [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 76)

118 É que o ciúme LHE trabalhára a alma todo o tempo decorrido desde a vespera.  
(narr.) (PS, p. 75)

Part-whole relationships (for [-HUMAN] possessors)

---

119 Lembrando-se da binga, sacou-a do bolso da calça; collocou a pedra com geito e bateu-LHE o fuzil: as scentelhas saltavam para a frente impellidas pelo vento e apagavam-se logo. (narr.) (PS, p. 22)

120 [...] outro, correndo do campo com um molho de arnica, pisava a planta por extrahir-LHE o succo. (narr.) (PS, p. 42)

121 Areiei a arma bem areiadinha, limpei-LHE os ouvidos, puz uma pedra nova em baixo do cão e carreguei-a. (dial.) (PS, p. 168)

Mental processes/feelings/actions (and results of these actions)

---

122 Como nada visse o rapaz que LHE atraísse a atenção no primeiro compartimento, avançou para o segundo [...] (narr.) (CA, p. 37)

123 Qualquer mané-jacá não se atrevia a botar um animal no palanque, ensilhal-o e aguentar-lhe os corcovos perto della: porque si o tal não fazia a coisa bem feita, a Paulina tirava-LHE a prosa num baque [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 125)

124 O corsel lubuno, pastor da tropilha, á sombra de tua fronde, sacode vaidosamente a cabeça para arrojar fóra da testa a crina basta do topete, que LHE encobre a vista [...] (narr.) (PS, p. 62)

125 Colocou-se de pé, crescida e tesa, à abertura da parede, e abriu os braços, para impedir-LHE com o corpo a indiscreta visita.

126 Soltou-se-LHE, entretanto, das caricias e das phrases: é que a mãe gritava por ella, com toda a insistencia [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 16)

127 - Nada, não senhor - respondeu ela, e correu a esconder a vergonha e desespero no seio da boa Margarida, que debalde tentou enxugar-LHE as lágrimas com consolações sensatas. (narr.) (CA, p. 46)

- 128 Foi no meio de todo esse rumor que elle a teve perto de si, ouvindo-LHE as poucas e gaguejadas palavras que ella conseguiu proferir. (narr.) (OC, p. 134)
- 129 A moça passava dias sem comer, noites sem dormir, e, quando alguma nova proeza do rapaz vinha LHE matar alguma pequenina esperança que alimentara no intervalo, chorava [...] (narr.) (CA, p. 46)
- 130 [...] e tão violentas se LHE apresentavam as crises de ciume, que o pobre do sub-delegado [...] teve que ameaçar-o, um dia, de lhe arrumar ás costas com o Anno do Nascimento. (narr.) (OC, p. 68)
- 131 A queda assanhou-LHE a fúria e o arrieiro, erguendo-se de um pulo, rasgou numa facada um farrapo branco que ondulava no ar; deu-lhe um bote e estrincou nos dedos um como tecido grosso. (narr.) (PS, p. 27)

## Kinship terms

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132 [...] as mães e as esposas faziam promessas sobre promessas a todos os santos do calendário, pedindo que LHES livrassem os queridos filhos e os maridos das malhas da rede recrutadora. (narr.) (CA, p. 20)

133 [...] não era para qualquer uma regateira LHE tomar o noivo. (narr.) (PS, p. 76)

134 [...] via-se repudiado de todos, porque o negro mal de Lazaro iria de mal a pior, não o duvidava, e o José LHE seria companheiro de sempre [...] porque tinha uma alma affectuosa e cheia de bondade. (narr.) (OC, p. 80)

135 Que novas tem vossa senhoria da frota do Reino? Ando receioso que pela ultima frota LHE chegue successor. (dial.) (PS, p. 141)

## Possessed items (clothes)

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136 Se havia, porém, nesse baile alguém alegre e satisfeito de sua sorte era o tenente-coronel Bento de Arruda que, sem dançar, [...] seguia com o olhar apaixonado todos os movimentos da mulher, cujos vestidos, às vezes, no rodopiar da valsa, vinham roçar-LHE as calças brancas, causando-lhe calafrios de contentamento e de amor. (narr.) (CA, p. 80)

137 E chegou a sonhar, uma triste noite, que elle a puzera á força num caixão azul, pregára-LHE as dobras do vestido branco, a tachas amarellas, no fundo do caixão, enterrára-lhe a grinalda de noiva na cabeça [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 160)

138 Dentre a multidão que se acotovellava na frente da casa do Contracto, [...] emergiu um vulto, que se encaminhou para a portaria, branquejando-LHE no traje mal distincto o boldrié dos dragões d'el-rei. (narr.) (PS, p. 146)

#### Possessed items (others)

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- 139 Pegou a rodear-LHE a casa, de longe e acauteladamente. (narr.) (OC, p. 3)
- 140 O Zeca Estevo [...] riscou chão ûa madrugada, nem bem o gallo pipuíra, que LHE morava em frente da janella, acabou de bater as asas e cantar pela terceira vez. (narr.) (OC, p. 74)
- 141 Os jovens tapuios tremiam só de ouvir-LHE o nome [...] (narr.) (CA, p. 20)
- 142 Meu tio Lourenço, que se incumbira de colher notícias, prometera empregar nisso toda a diligência. Faltou-lhe persistência ou o tempo LHE foi absorvido pelos negócios... não sei. (narr.) (CA, p. 134)
- 143 Mas o Benedicto estava palpitoso de desfeita e de briga, botou outro verso malcriado, sem LHE chegar a vez do canto. (narr.) (OC, p. 103-104)

#### Spatial relations (accepted examples)

---

- 144 Os cabanos, apesar das suas fumaças de valentia, não ousavam encontrar-se com as forças legais e fugiam-LHES na frente [...] (dial.) (CA, p. 135)
- 145 As sombras fugiam, esfloravam as paredes em ascensão rapida, illuminando-lhe subitamente o rosto, brincando-lhe um momento nos cabellos arripiados, ou dançando-LHE na frente. (narr.) (PS, p. 28)
- 146 Tomaram-LHE a deanteira. (narr.) (PS, p. 71)

#### Spatial relations (refused examples)

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- 147 Quando eles desembarcarem aqui, é metermo-nos no mato, depois LHES cáírmos de improviso em cima com uma boa carga à baioneta, e não fica um só para remédio. (dial.) (CA, p. 63)
- 148 Si o limal é bem assignalado, você cai-LHE em riba, e si é picaço ou é quatrólho, você fôge delle? (dial.) (OC, p. 174)
- 149 E o Geraldo, que notára o momento em que ella reparou na fala do passaro, chegou-se-LHE para perto e disse com a voz meio sumida. (narr.) (OC, p. 123)

150 E foi preciso mandar campear o petiço, áquella hora velha e pelo cultivado humido de orvalheira, porque o José LHE estava a apparecer deante, todo risonho e satisfeito, ao ver que a promessa fôra cumprida. (narr.) (OC, p. 80)

#### 2.2.4 Grammatical relation of the possessum

According to Haspelmath, “EP constructions are favored if the syntactic relation of the possessum is PP < direct object < unaccusative subject < unergative subject < transitive subject” (1999, p. 113). Lamiroy tells us that the possessum can be an intransitive subject, a direct object or a PP (in a transitive or intransitive clause) in French, Spanish and Italian (see 151-154, also from Lamiroy), but that intransitive subject PMs are losing ground to the IP alternative with the possessive pronoun in French (2001, pp. 102-104). Lamiroy also says that the possessum usually functions as a subject or a direct object in Romanian, the PP structure being perceived as “archaic” (2001, p. 104). Furthermore, subject PMs are usually post-verbal in Spanish, Italian and Romanian and pre-verbal in French (2001, p. 105).

151 Les mains LUI tremblent (FR.)/LE pica la nariz (SP.)/MI fa male la testa (IT.)

152 Le livre LUI est tombé des mains (FR.)/No ME entra en la cabeza hacer esto (SP.)/Non MI viene in mente il suo nome (IT.)

153 Marie TE lavera la tête (FR.)/SE pone los zapatos nuevos (SP.)/MettiTI la giacca (IT.)

154 Luc LUI a fait un tatouage au bras (FR.)/Sus hijos LE echan en cara que trabaja demasiado (SP.)/GLI avevano messo una corona sulla testa (IT.)

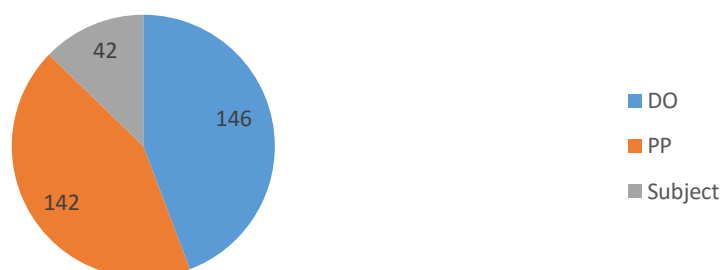
Our own analysis has shown that subject PMs are the least favorite choice in the corpus (12,73%), so written BP seems to be actually siding with French on this one. The percentages for DO and oblique PMs are virtually the same (44,24% and 43,03%, respectively), although there is a strong correlation between the oblique construction and body part PMs (see Graph 7)<sup>37</sup>. Furthermore, while it is true that all the authors tend to avoid subject PMs, each one of them has his own preferences: for instance,

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<sup>37</sup>  $\chi^2 = 27.599$ ;  $df = 4$ ;  $p = 0.00002$  for the observed frequencies of body parts, mental processes, possessed items.

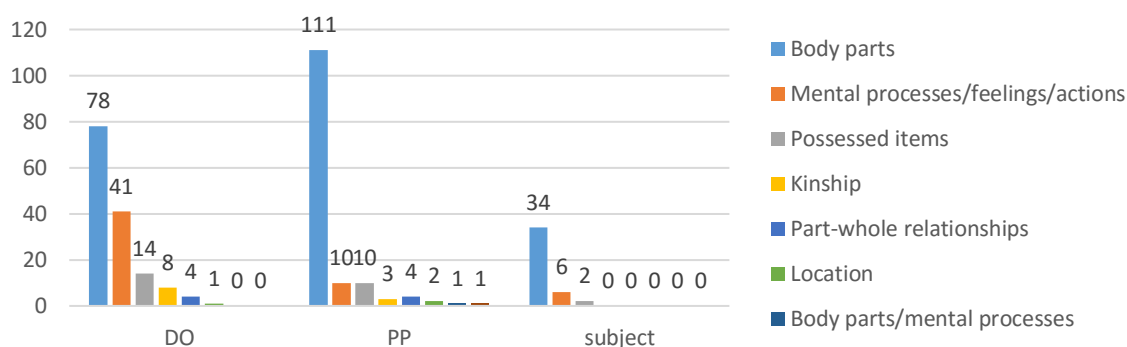
Sousa prefers DO PMs and Silveira oblique PMs (see Graph 8)<sup>38</sup>. In other words, stylistic and linguistic constraints are at work here.

Grammatical relation of the possessum



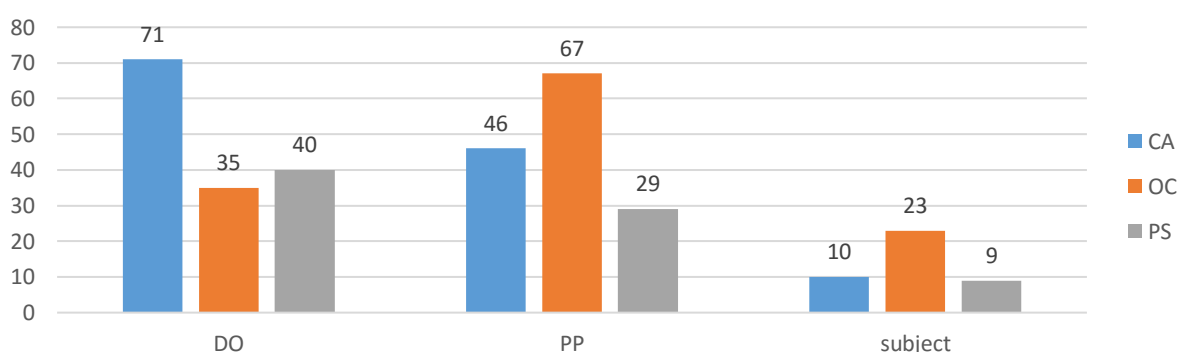
Graph 6: Grammatical relation of the possessum

Grammatical relation of the possessum (by type of PM)



Graph 7: Grammatical relation of the possessum (by type of PM)

Grammatical relation of the possessum (by author)



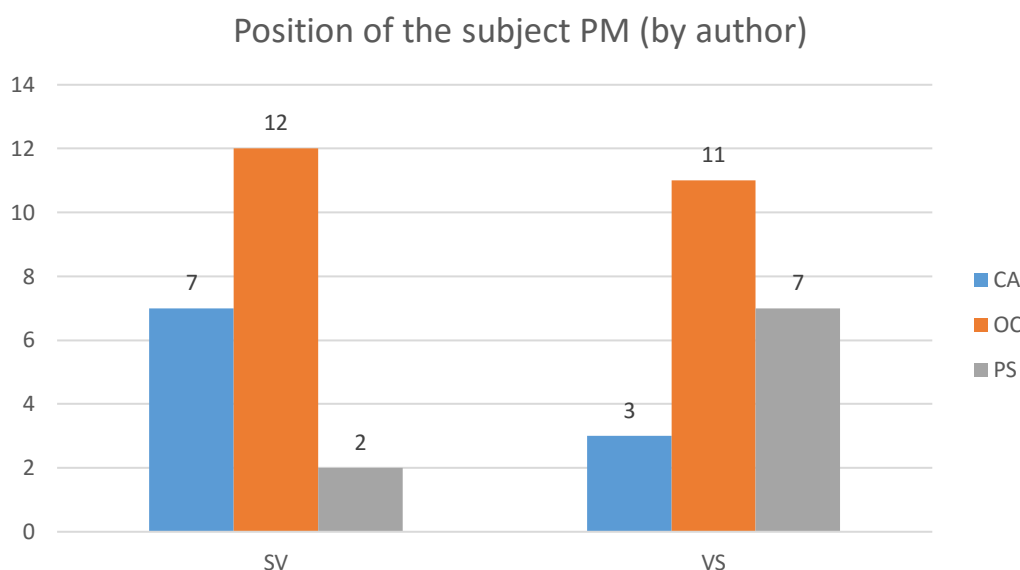
Graph 8: Grammatical relation of the possessum (by author)

Finally, the subject PM can be found in both pre-verbal and post-verbal positions, at literally 50% for each variable. We did not have enough data to draw

<sup>38</sup>  $\chi^2 = 23.064$ ;  $df = 4$ ;  $p = 0.00012$ .



categorical conclusions, except for the fact that Sousa seems to prefer the SV order, Arinos the VS order and Silveira uses both of them equally (see Graph 9).



Graph 9: Position of the subject PM (by author)

### Subject PM

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155 [A voz cresceu] mais, cresceu tanto afinal, que os ouvidos do capitão zumbiram, tremeram-LHE as pernas e caiu no limiar de uma porta. (narr.) (CA, p. 54)

156 Sentiu vergarem-LHE os joelhos [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 165)

157 [...] às vezes batiam-se-LHE os queixos e um gemido entrecortado lhe rebentava da garganta. (narr.) (PS, p. 38)

158 A Jeronyma [...] olhou-o, vendo que os olhos se LHE esbugalhavam de modo temeroso [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 118)

159 Engrossavam-se-lhe as asas do nariz, iam-se-LHE sumindo os olhos sob a carne tumefeita [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 73)

### Oblique PM

---

160 Os galhos úmidos das árvores batiam-LHE no rosto. (narr.) (CA, p. 39)

161 Mas doeu-LHE nos olhos a secura dos cafezaes, que erguiam para o céu varetas nuas. (narr.) (OC, p. 140)

162 Das orelhas pendiam-LHE brincos grandes [...] (narr.) (PS, p. 67)

163 Mas o capitão pôs-LHE a mão no ombro dizendo em voz repassada de mel [...] (narr.) (CA, p. 23)

164 Recresceram logo boatos [...] que montára num cabra secco e LHE riscára as chilenas pelo corpo, a todo o gosto [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 37)

165 Nesse instante, Paschoal tinha corrido atraz delle e LHE descarregado na nuca um tremendo murro [...] (dial.) (PS, p. 195)

#### Direct object (DO) PM

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166 Nesse ponto de suas reminiscências, a Anica foi assaltada por uma ideia medonha que lhe fez correr um frio glacial pela espinha dorsal, ressecou-LHE a garganta e inundou-LHE de suor a fronte. (narr.) (CA, p. 88)

167 O mulato adiantou-se. Um lúgubre som de ferros acompanhou-LHE o andar. (narr.) (CA, p. 137)

168 E o Chico Antonio esbarrou o cavallo em frente da porteira, amarrou-LHE o cabo a uma argola do moirão, tocou-o para a sombra [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 38)

169 [...] e aquelle frio da lua (a sinh'Anna era capaz de jural-o) trespassava-LHE o coração pouco a pouco. (narr.) (OC, p. 98)

170 Um longo soluço despedaçou-LHE a garganta num ai sentido e profundo [...] (narr.) (PS, p. 29)

171 Morre, desaparece, que talvez [...] a tua dona mais gentil, aquella para quem tuas alcatifas tinham mais delicada caricia ao receber-LHE o corpinho mimoso [...] talvez te conduza para alguma região ideal [...] (narr.) (PS, p. 56-57)

#### 2.2.5 Affectedness of the possessor

According to Haspelmath (1999, p. 111), “external possessors are only possible if the possessor is thought of as being mentally affected by the described situation.”<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Podlesskaya and Rakhilina came up with a theory for Russian based on this claim by Haspelmath. According to them, greater affectedness favors dative possession, but less affected predicates prefer to express the possessor as an accusative (precisely the ‘possessor splitting’ construction we mentioned in chapter 1 (Payne et al., 1999b, 1999, p. 13). Here is yet another idea for future research.

We were not, however, able to find a universal, clear explanation of how to distinguish between physical and mental affectedness, so we have described them ourselves.

We have considered the possessor to be ‘physically’ affected by the situation in cases in which the event denoted by the verb had a direct impact on the body or mind of the possessor himself. Also, to us, anything that had a direct impact on someone or something extrinsically related to the possessor (kinfolk, possessed items except for clothes...) was labeled ‘mental’ affectedness. Finally, we have created a special category for sentences containing a perception or cognitive verb where it is clear that the possessor is not the patient of the process.

The results show that the possessor is usually affected in some way, whether the repercussions of the event of the verb fall on him himself or on the people and objects he possesses; however, like Spanish and Romanian (see examples 172-175 taken from Lamiroy (2001, p. 107)), written BP also allows non-affected possessors to be expressed externally in a dative construction.

172 ?\* Je LUI ai vu la figure (FR.)

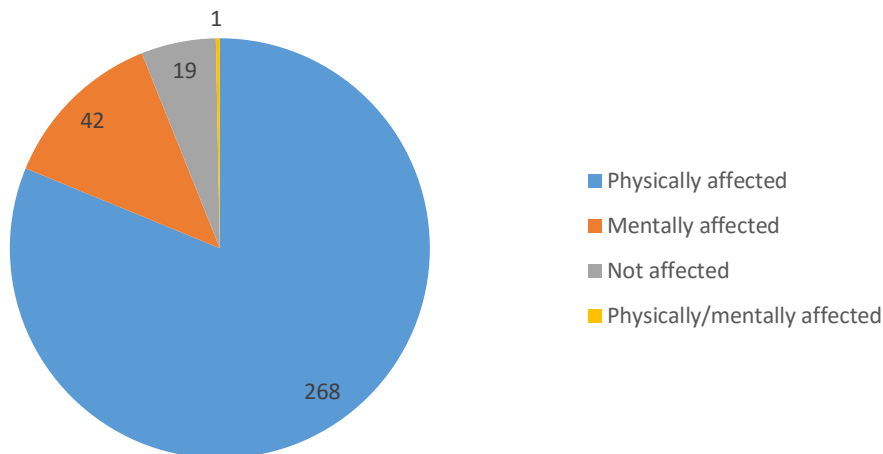
173 ? GLI ho visto la faccio (IT.)

174 LE he visto la cara (SP.)

175 I-am văzut profilul (RO.)

That being said, more research would be necessary to see if dative possessors are significantly more affected than the possessors in other EP strategies or than the possessors in regular IPCs with the possessive pronoun or the genitive *dele/dela*.

Affectedness of the possessor



Graph 10: Affectedness of the possessor

#### Physically affected PR

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176 Matias Paxiúba, o brasileiro, cumpria parte de sua promessa, incendiando a casa do juiz de paz e queimando-LHE o corpo, crivado de facadas, no enorme brasido. (narr.) (CA, p. 115)

177 [...] trepei acima da vaca e sangrei-a na veia do pescoço, e logo o Chico Pitanga LHE furou a barriga [...] (narr.) (CA, p. 74)

178 Mas ahi, como se afastasse, roçou-LHE uma das mãos a trança da Candóca. (narr.) (OC, p. 5)

179 Inté já correu que elle abriu o chambre depois de LHE chegar a piuva no lombo. (dial.) (OC, p. 115)

180 [...] perto da nunca e presa pela golla da camisa, uma moeda de outro se LHE grudára na pelle. (narr.) (PS, p. 37)

181 Somente o movimento das narinas denotava a grande agitação que LHE ia na alma. (narr.) (CA, p. 121)

182 Como nada visse o rapaz que LHE atraísse a atenção no primeiro compartimento, avançou para o segundo [...] (narr.) (CA, p. 37)

183 Mas o juiz cortou-LHE a fala [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 106)

184 Sem mais detença, foram se barafustando pela escadaria do alpendre, em cujo topo a porta de fóra LHES cortou o passo. (narr.) (PS, p. 34)

185 Cortou-LHES o dialogo, entrementes, a vizinha garrula de Cotinha, exclamando: [...] (narr.) (PS, p. 142)

186 O suor caía-lhe em grossas gotas pela testa e rosto abaixo, banhando-LHE a camisa de algodão e um bentinho de baeta azul [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 19)

187 O Inácio cortou-LHE as cordas, lavou-lhe a ferida com água avinagrada e teve de empregar a força para obrigá-la a deitar-se, pois ardia em febre. (narr.) (CA, p. 26)

#### Mentally affected PR

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188 O Eduardo Inglês, no seu sítio da outra banda, não se julgava seguro da vida, com medo do José do Monte, que prometera tirar-LHE o cacaua por demanda. (narr.) (CA, p. 61)

189 Não dera acordo de si quando LHE levaram o filho para a canoa, nem sequer sentira a última e bestial expansão da ira do recrutador. (narr.) (CA, p. 25)

190 Sa Januaria duvidava sempre: olhou-o, remirou-o com todo o sossego, convencida de que tudo aquillo não passava de uma cuca que o Cabelludo LHE botára no marido, para ganhar molhadura melhor. (narr.) (OC, p. 81)

191 Passaram-se annos, e a Eulalia teve que acceitar o Vicente do Rancho, moço de boa mão e de boa cabeça, quando elle deu os ultimos repassos num piquira macaco do pae della e entrou a cercar-LHE a mãe de carinhos e de presentes. (narr.) (OC, p. 114)

192 Criado em meio desse labutar, [...] captára Manuel Lucio Paes a inteira confiança do guarda-mór; administrava-LHE a fazenda com dedicação [...] (narr.) (PS, p. 89)

193 A xintan [...] toda se encoleriza e arrufa quando alguém se LHE achega do ninho [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 65)

194 Que novas tem vossa senhoria da frota do Reino? Ando receioso que pela ultima frota LHE chegue successor. (dial.) (PS, p. 141)

195 E ela nunca chorara, nunca desde que nascera se LHE vira uma lágrima nos olhos!  
(narr.) (CA, p. 58)

196 Dominando esse tumulto, ressoou uma voz alta e rude, que me penetrou até a medula, quando LHE ouvi estas cruéis palavras: [...] (narr.) (CA, p. 113)

197 [...] contemplou-a [a mula] fóra de si, vendo-LHE as ansias quasi sem as compreender [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 57)

198 A doença do Mané Ramo veio feroz: chamado o curador mais mestre das vizinhanças, o Loredó, observou as feições do rapaz, reparou-LHE na inchação [...] (narr.) (OC, p. 117)

199 [- Um bandeira! [um tamanduá] bandeira!] - gritou o misero [menino] e, espigando-LHE a estatura exígua, levantou a cabeça, abrindo os braços em menção de quem quer abraçar. (narr.) (PS, p. 110)

200 [...] um conviva joven [...] marcava muito attento uma valsa figurada, ancioso pela hora appetecida em que podesse cingir o corpo airoso de Cotinha Caldeyra, e sorvendo-LHE o perfume do cabello de côr alambreada [...] (narr.) (PS, p. 138)

201 A moça conhecia-LHE todos os gestos e as mais insignificantes predileções. (narr.) (CA, p. 97)

202 [...] Philippinho não LHE pôde compreender as palavras. (narr.) (PS, p. 78)

#### 2.2.6 Modality of enunciation (narrative vs dialogue)

The authors we have chosen wished to portray Brazil's people, customs and tales as authentically as possible, often in the form of short stories, showing (like the Romantics before them and the Modernists after them) that Brazilian people and folklore could very well be a legitimate subject matter in literature.

However, while Modernists actively tried to incorporate vernacular features into their own speech, pre-modernist authors often viewed these features simply as another trait to help build a credible story (Teyssier, 1980, p. 114). Furthermore, even though Teyssier (1980, p. 114) says that pre-modernist storytellers "often imitate the

coarse language of the people”, there is no way to tell beforehand how much of the vernacular is going to seep through into the literary language. As Bosi (1966, p. 13) tells us, “[em] alguns prosadores, impõe-se um interesse regionalista mais específico, que vai, nos casos extremos, à incorporação do semidialeto local à língua literária”. Indeed, at first glance, Silveira (in *Os caboclos*) seems to take “incorporate” his “semidialect” into the literary language, i.e. the narrative, and not only as a stylistic device to make his dialogues more realistic<sup>40</sup>. On the other hand, Sousa (in *Contos amazônicos*) and particularly Arinos (in *Pelo sertão*) are much more conservative.

As a general rule, the narrative shows signs of monitored speech that reflect the authors’ educated upbringing, whereas dialogue is sometimes used to depict oral and/or popular speech patterns (203-204). Moreover, this is the language of the countryside we are talking about here – predictably, it displays some archaic features<sup>41</sup>, like the old forms of address *vossemecê* or *vassuncê* (205 and 207). Finally, there is a strong contrast between the narrators in Silveira, on the one hand, and Sousa and Arinos on the other hand. The narrators in Sousa and Arinos tend to be well-educated people, extremely erudite in Arinos’ case<sup>42</sup>, whereas in Silveira (and this is an impressionistic opinion based on our own analysis of the vocabulary, syntax and rhythm of the narrative), it is the opposite (see example 206).

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<sup>40</sup> I am a native speaker from Mato Grosso, practically grew up in a farm, and yet have been confronted with words (and sometimes full sentences) in Silveira that might have been Chinese for all I could understand, e.g. *Inté já correu que elle abriu o chambre depois de LHE chegar a piuva no lombo* ‘It has already been said that he ran away after getting beaten in the butt with a piuva stick’ (p. 115). I did not really encounter that problem with the others. Silveira focuses on the life of the “simple people”, displaying an astounding sense of observation as his rendering of the caipira dialect is spot-on.

<sup>41</sup> It is not always easy to tell whether a word or construction is really popular or simply obsolete now. It helps that some of them survived in my own dialect: *pedir-lhes que largassem mão daquillo* (OC, p. 132; ‘largar mão’ means ‘to stop’), *um casal de curiangos passou relando os hombros do Pedro* (OC, p. 167; ‘relar’ means ‘touch lightly’).

<sup>42</sup> This is something we were able to gather from the numerous references to historical figures (the Duchess of Fontanges and the Marquise of Montespan in *A Cadeirinha*), Classical literature (Homer and the Illiad in *Burity perdido*) and Greek mythology (the hippogriff in *Paizagem alpestre* and Prometheus in *A velhinha*) and to pre-Columbian culture (the Inca road system in *Paizagem alpestre*), to mention only a few. But there are exceptions, too – see *Joaquim Mironga*.

203 – Não gosta de bolo de arroz, então? Pois olhe que nossa tia nunca deixou de fazer elle nos pagodes que dava. E nossa tia era carioca da gemma! (dial.) (OC, p. 154)<sup>43</sup>.

204 [...]: eu nunca não quiz que fosse eu o primeiro a dar-LHE uma noticia rúim. (dial.) (OC, p. 181)

205 – Vossemecê<sup>44</sup> póde saber, eu não duvido; mas na hora da cousa feia, quando a tropa pegar arriar a carga pela estrada, é um vira-tem-mão, e, - Venancio p'r'aqui, Venancio p'r'acolé. (dial.) (PS, p. 8)

206 Ora, um bello dia, não podendo mais comsigo, apontou no corrego de sopetão, e foi rasgando logo o pinho: – Como vai, nha Candóca? O seu povo 'tá bom? (OC, p. 4)

207 – Arre! tio Ignacio! Vassuncê mandou que nós viesse ás dez horas, nós aqui estemo', e vassuncê nem se mexe! (OC, p. 47)

Naturally, illiterate people can narrate a story and educated people can express themselves in the dialogues. Whenever we could tell for sure that the narrator was uneducated (from context or from his linguistic choices), his interventions were treated as dialogue samples (e.g. CA's *O Gado do Valha-me-Deus* (208-210), PS' *Joaquim Mironga*). Passages of indirect speech narrated by educated characters were labeled 'narrative' (e.g. *A cadeirinha* in PS) and every instance of direct speech was labeled 'dialogue'.

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<sup>43</sup> Here, the character uses a full subject pronoun instead of the accusative clitic *o*. This is one of the most outstanding features of BP and it is widely adopted by its speakers but categorically spurned by the prescriptive grammar.

<sup>44</sup> *Vossemecê* is an intermediate step in the evolution from the form of address *vossa mercê* to the current 2<sup>nd</sup> person personal pronoun *você*. What is interesting here is that *vossemecê* often co-occurs with *você* in the same text. In the example mentioned above, a character named Venancio is talking to his boss, Manuel, so he addresses him as *vossemecê*. Later, when talking to the young cowboys (his subordinates), Venancio uses the form "você": "Gente! o patrão já está na tapéra. Deus permita que nada lhe aconteça. Mas, **vocês** sabem: ninguém gosta deste pouso mal assombrado." (Arinos, p. 15). The young cowboys also refer to Venancio using *vossemecê*: "Largue da vida dos outros e vá cuidar da sua, tio Venancio! [...] enquanto nós [...] já estavam atolados no capinzal molhado, vossemecê tava ahi na beira do fogo, feito um cachorro velho." (Arinos, p. 32). Our guess here is that *vossemecê* became specialized to refer to one's superiors as a sign of respect before completely disappearing from contemporary BP. On a side note, the young cowboys also call Venancio *tio* – I grew up calling the adults around me *tio* and *tia*, too. Finally, Arinos uses *vossa mercê* when telling a story taking place in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (*O contractador dos diamantes*, p. 141).



208 [...] logo, logo, começou a boiarada a uivar, “paresque” chorando a morte da maninha, que fazia um berreiro dos meus pecados, com a diferença que era um choro que parecia de gente humana, e nos dava cada sacudidela no estômago, que só por vergonha não soluzei, ao passo que o maricas do Chico Pitanga chorava como um bezerro, que metia dó (CA, *O Gado do Valha-me-Deus*, p. 75).

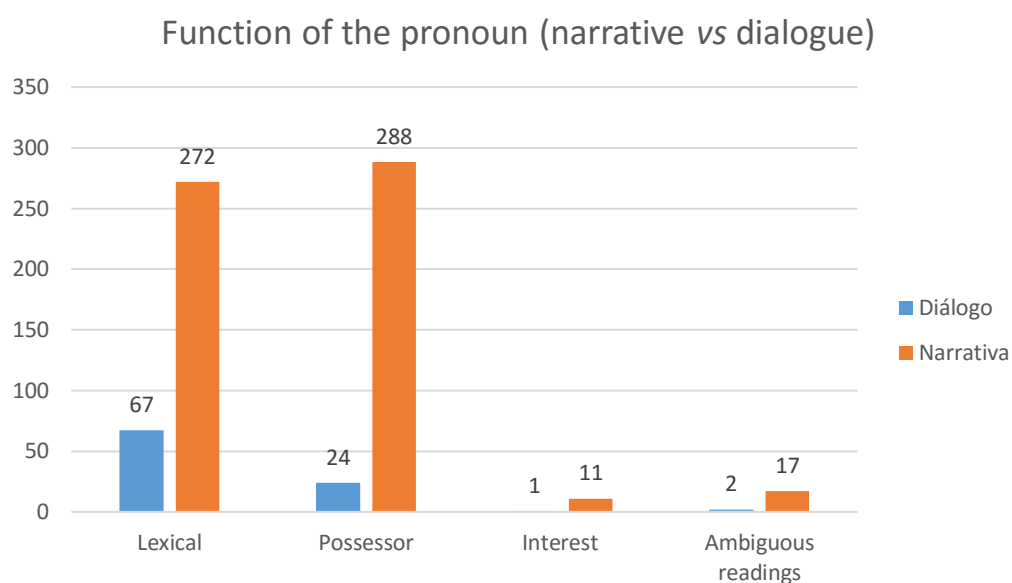
209 [...] e de vez em quando bandos e bandos de marrecas, colhereiras, nambus [...] e arapapás, que levantavam o voo debaixo das patas dos cavalos, soltando gritos agudos, verdadeiras gargalhadas por se estarem rindo do nosso vexame lá na “sua língua deles”<sup>45</sup> (CA, *O Gado do Valha-me-Deus*, p. 76).

210 Voltamos “para trás”, moídos que nem mandioca puba em tipiti [...] (CA, *O Gado do Valha-me-Deus*, p. 77).

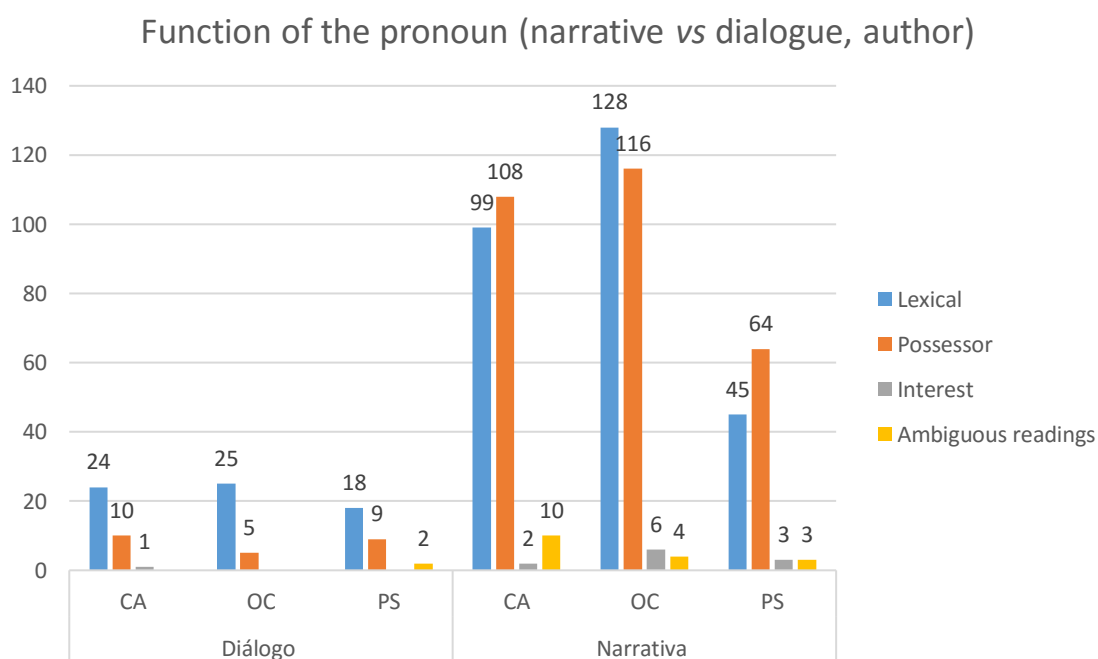
Our data regarding the dialogue is scarce. Nonetheless, we can tell that dative PRs are more frequent in the narrative than in the dialogues. Indeed, out of 588 items in the narrative, 272 (46,26%) were lexical datives and 288 (48,98%) were unambiguous possessors. In the dialogues, the frequency of dative PRs decreases considerably: out of 94 occurrences, 67 (71,28%) were lexical datives and 24 (25,53%) were possessors, a tendency observed in all authors (see Graph 12).

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<sup>45</sup> Note that the narrator uses two types of internal possession (the possessive pronoun and the genitive construction) simultaneously. To us, that shows that the possessive pronoun alone cannot successfully refer to the 3<sup>rd</sup> person in Brazilian vernacular (see section 3).



Graph 11: Function of the dative pronoun (narrative *vs* dialogue)



Graph 12: Function of the dative pronoun (narrative *vs* dialogue, author)

### 3 Conclusion and further perspectives

Dative possession is one of the diverging features between Brazilian and European Portuguese. Indeed, the construction is still productive in Portugal, while it has all but disappeared from spoken BP. Nevertheless, like other linguistic phenomena such as the postposing of the clitic pronoun, dative EPCs may still be found in written BP. In this paper, we have attempted to describe the construction whenever it appeared with a 3<sup>rd</sup> person dative pronoun in our 19<sup>th</sup> century literary corpus.

We have chosen to focus on the 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitic because there is evidence that it does not quite belong in Brazilian vernacular – for instance, it does not happen in the speech of illiterate subjects and it seems to have a different distribution than that of the other pronouns. In particular, Brazilians usually replace the 3<sup>rd</sup> person dative with two prepositional constructions: *para ele/ela* if it is an indirect object and *dele/dela* if it is a possessor. We believe that even though BP's clitic system is probably not entirely responsible for the decline of dative EPCs in the language (remember that the construction is also receding, albeit at a slower pace, with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> persons), it might have at least sped up the process.

The analysis of our data has shown that dative possession in BP (at least in pre-modernist literary language) has fewer restrictions than French and Italian. BP also allows the dative PR in some contexts in which Spanish does not, but we are not sure dative EPCs are as frequent in BP as they are in Spanish. Romanian is clearly the most permissive of Romance languages in this respect, maybe partly because its dative PR functions as an unmarked alternative to the emphatic possessive adjective, so we would say that the BP variety we have studied here stands with Spanish between French and Italian at one side of the DP continuum and Romanian at the other. Among other features, 19<sup>th</sup> century literary BP allows [-INANIMATE] possessors on the one hand and non-body part, kinship and alienable possessa on the other; there were examples in which the possessor was not affected by the event denoted by the verb (with perception verbs, for example); finally, the possessum is usually found inside a prepositional phrase, but it can also be encoded as a direct object and (less frequently) as a subject.

The next step in our research is to calculate the frequency rates of dative PRs in the corpus in cases in which it could have been replaced by a possessive pronoun or by a genitive PP (i.e. *dele/dela*) in order to effectively determine the productivity of the construction and to see what linguistic factors motivate the choice of the dative PR in written BP. We would also like to compare this data to contemporary, post-modernist literary BP and to European Portuguese to see if and how restrictions have shifted through time and space, respectively. The ultimate goal is to link the absence of dative possession in BP to other linguistic phenomena or tendencies.

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