**Ditransitive Sentences in Brazilian Portuguese: From a VP Shell to a PP Shell**

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**Brazilian Portuguese (BP) Ditransitives**

- In speech and more informal written register, Brazilians highly prefer the preposition *para* to introduce IOs in ditransitive sentences.
- The dative *lhe* is also preferably substituted by the oblique forms *para ele (a)*.

**Dynamic verbs of transference and movement:**

1. *Maria enviou uma carta para João / ele*  
   Maria sent a letter *P* to João. OBL / 3SG  
   ‘Maria sent a letter to João / him’

2. *Maria enviou uma carta para São Paulo*  
   Maria sent a letter *P* to São Paulo  
   ‘Maria sent a letter to São Paulo’

**Creation verbs:**

3. *Maria preparou o jantar *a/ para o João / ele*  
   Maria prepared the dinner *P* to João. OBL / 3SG  
   ‘Maria prepared dinner for João’

**Semantic Readings of the Indirect Objects (IOs) in BP**

- The IO introduced by *para* can have two semantic readings in examples (1) and (3):
  1. **Recipient IO:** the IO receives the DO – semantic reading of ‘to’.
  2. **Benefactive IO:** the IO is the benefactive of the event of the subject preparing the DO – semantinc reading of ‘for’.
- The IO in (2) is a pure Locative.

**European Portuguese (EP)**

- The preposition *a* is a dummy element that attributes dative Case to the DP.
- The clitic *lhe* is the morphological expression of the dative.
- Direct transfer of possession introduced by a low - applicative head. (cf. Torres Morais 2007)

5. *A Maria enviou uma carta ao João / enviou-lhe uma carta*  
   The Maria sent a letter *P* to João. DAT / sent -3SG.DAT a letter  
   ‘Maria sent João a letter’

6. *A Maria preparou o jantar ao João / preparou-lhe o jantar*  
   The Maria prepared the dinner *P* to João. DAT / prepare-3SG.DAT the dinner  
   ‘Maria made João dinner’

**Prepositional Dative Construction (PDC)**

- Indirect transfer of possession - i.e. ‘Maria’ sent the letter first to José, for instance, then to ‘João’:

7. *A Maria enviou uma carta para o João / enviou-lhe uma carta*  
   The Maria sent a letter *P* to João. OBL / sent -3SG.DAT a letter  
   ‘Maria send a letter to João’

**Pure Locative:**

8. *A Maria enviou uma carta para Lisbon / enviou-lhe uma carta*  
   The Maria sent a letter *P* to Lisbon.OBL / sent -3SG.DAT a letter  
   ‘Maria sent a letter to Lisbon’

**Diachronic Changes in BP**

- Dummy preposition *a* is being replaced by lexical preposition *para*.
- Third person dative clitic *lhe* is being replaced by *para ele (a)*.

**Brazilians Portuguese reanalyzed the EP Ditransitives**

(5) and (6) as the PDCs (1) and (3)

**Input Generalization**

- Parametric variation emerges from the interaction of an unspecified UG, the PLD and the Factor 3 (cf. Chomsky 2005).
- Factor 3 main manifestations: Feature Economy (FE) and Input Generalization (IG). (cf. Biberauer & Roberts 2015).
- Brazilian children generalized the preposition *para* to introduce all IOs: locatives, goals and benefactives.

- Loss of dative arguments introduced by an applicative head in BP.

**Conclusions**

- BP is gradually substituting the dummy preposition *a* by the lexical preposition *para*, as well as losing the 3rd person dative clitic *lhe*.
- The argument structure of ditransitives in BP do not entail applicative heads because it does not have the dative case expressed morphologically anymore.
- The relation between the DO and the IO selected by the verbal root is introduced in the argument structure by a head *p*.

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**References**