

Verbal negatives structures in Paulistano Portuguese

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In Brazilian Portuguese (BP), there are three structures of negatives (SCHWEGLER, 1991; FURTADO DA CUNHA, 2007): (NEG1) by using a pre-verbal negative word; (NEG2) by placing the negative word both before and after the verb; and (NEG3) by using a post-verbal negative word. NEG1 is the canonical form in Portuguese, the last two being considered non-canonical structures. NEG3 is often referred to as characteristic of Northeastern varieties of BP (MARROQUIM, 1945; RAMALHO, 1998; MELLO et alli., 1998; SCHWENTER, 2005). This study proposes an envelope of variation for the study of the social and linguistic restrictions to the use of these forms in the city of São Paulo.

São Paulo's variety of portuguese has been understudied (OUSHIRO, 2010; MENDES, 2009). The last enterprise to describe this speech community (the NURC Project, Castilho & Preti, 1986, 1987; Preti & Urbano, 1988, 1990), dates from the 1970's. Currently, the SP2010 Project (MENDES, 2011) aims to build a representative sample of the Paulistano variety of Portuguese. Anticipating different approaches for the same data body by numbers of researches, the SP2010 maintains a profile for each interviewed where one could find precise ethnological information as where are their parents from, exactly age, considerations about the economic situation etc., preserving, of course, their anonymity. Differently from NURC, the speakers in the SP2010 sample are stratified by level of education

For the study of the sentential negatives, the discussions in this paper are based on tokens extracted from a subsample of 12 recorded interviews from the SP2010 corpus distributed equally in two genders, three ages and two levels of formal study.

In order to define the envelope of variation for the study of negatives in São Paulo, this paper discusses the model presented by Schwenter (2005, 2006) and other approaches relying only on phonological reinforcement or emphasis. Although Schwenter's proposal was thought of for negation in Brazilian Portuguese (BP) in general, this paper argues that it is not entirely fit for data of Paulistano Portuguese.

Schwenter (2005, 2006) states that emphasis and phonological explanations for the use of non-canonical forms are inexact and insufficient to explain the use of NEG1, NEG2 and NEG3 can. Common explanations to such a negative system refer to NEG2 and NEG3 as negative to presuppositions. Instead, he proposes a discourse-pragmatic model of restrictions to their use in which the proposition being negated must have been activated in old discourse directly or not. According to him, NEG3 can occur when the proposition being negated is directly activated in the discourse; NEG2 can occur in the context above, but also when the proposition being negated is contextually activated, when it's old in the discourse or when it's inferrable by the one who's speaking; NEG1, however, can occur in all contexts, including those in which the information being negated is new.

In utilizing this model to analyze data from the São Paulo variety of Portuguese (SPBP), this paper shows that NEG3 actually share its set of restrictions with NEG2. Aiming further quantitative studies, in this body of data it is possible to notice non-canonical negative – specially NEG2 - usage increased in low studies rates, low ages, women, and even in those whose parents are not naturally from the city of São Paulo. Further, these preliminary data may suggest this study must also aim to ethnological and gender questions which research will be sustained by detailed ethnological information SP2010 corpus keeps from each subject. The low frequency of NEG3 is another question this study must take account of. As seen in other

studies (SCHWENTER, 2005), the low frequency of NEG3 – about 1% in the body of data studied in this paper - can explain differences between restrictions analysis.