

ON THE SYNTAX OF BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE: PASSIVES AND POSSESSOR RAISING STRUCTURES

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Introduction

▪ *Goals of the presentation*

- ❶ To show that Brazilian Portuguese has two different possessor raising structures;
- ❷ To describe the syntactic and semantic properties of one of these structures – the agent-possessor alternation;
- ❸ To describe the syntactic and semantic properties of two passive structures of Brazilian Portuguese – canonical and non-canonical passives;
- ❹ To present the similarities and differences among these three structures and
- ❺ To argue in favor of an analysis of these structures which employs, as its common property, the smuggling approach (Collins 2005).

▪ *Organization of the presentation*

Section 1: Types of possessor raising structures in Brazilian Portuguese

Section 2: General properties of the agent-possessor alternation

Section 3: Overview of passive sentences in Brazilian Portuguese

Section 4: Analysis

1. Two types of possessor raising constructions in Brazilian Portuguese syntax

- A series of studies on Brazilian Portuguese syntax (Pontes 1986, Everett 1986, Camacho 2003, Floripi 2004, Rodrigues 2004, 2010, Lunguinho 2006, Perini 2008, Floripi & Nunes 2009) advocates a possessor raising analysis for sentences such as (1) and (2):

(1) a. [O cabeleireiro] cortou [o cabelo d[o João]].

Literally: The hairdresser cut the hair of-the João

‘The hairdresser cut João’s hair.’

b. [O João] cortou [o cabelo]¹.

Literally: The João cut the hair

‘João had his hair cut.’

(2) a. [Alguém] quebrou [o braço d[o João]].

Literally: Someone broke the arm of-the João

‘Someone broke João’s arm.’

b. [O João] quebrou [o braço].

Literally: The João broke the arm

‘João broke his arm.’

¹ This sentence can also have an agentive interpretation: *João cut his own hair*. However, this interpretation does not correspond to the alternate form; it corresponds to the agentive reflexive use of the verb *cut*. The same agentive reflexive interpretation is possible for (2b) and it is pragmatically excluded in most situations. Hereafter, we will not refer to this agentive interpretation.

According to these studies, (1) and (2) seem to behave alike: the (a) examples, whose form is [DP₁ V [DP₂ of DP₃]], alternate with (b), whose form is [DP₃ V DP₂] and where the possessor argument DP₃ raises to the subject position in the alternate form.

▪ However...

Caçado (2010a,b): (1) and (2) represent two different types of possessor raising constructions found in Brazilian Portuguese.

Evidences

- *Interpretive differences*: although (1b) and (2b) share the same form, these sentences have different semantic interpretation:

(3) O João cortou o cabelo.

‘João had someone cut his hair deliberately’

(4) O João quebrou o braço.

#‘João had someone break his arm *deliberately*’.

‘João had his arm broke *accidentally*’

- *Nature of the subject*: sentences with verbs of the type of (1b), verbs of the class of *cortar* (‘to cut’), cannot have inanimate subjects, contrary to sentences with verbs of the type of (2b), verbs of the class of *quebrar* (‘to break’), which accept them:

(5) a. O João cortou o galho da árvore.

Literally: João cut the branch of the tree

‘João had the tree’s branch cut.’

b. *A árvore cortou o galho.

Literally: The tree cut the branch

(6) a. O João quebrou o galho da árvore.

‘João broke the tree’s branch.’

b. A árvore quebrou o galho.

Literally: The tree broke the branch

- *PP agent*: possessor raising constructions with verbs of the type of *cortar* allow for the realization of the agent external argument as a PP headed by the preposition *com* (‘by’), contrary to verbs of the type of *quebrar*:

(7) O João cortou o cabelo [*com o cabeleireiro*].

Literally: The João cut the hair with the hairdresser

‘João had his hair cut by the hairdresser.’

(8) *O João quebrou o braço [*com alguém*].

Literally: The João broke the arm with someone

Conclusions

Based on the facts above, and others, Caçado (2010a,b) proposes that the linguistic phenomena shown in (1) and (2) are distinct and that these possessor raising phenomena are types of verbal alternations.

- (1b) exemplifies the *agent-possessor alternation*
- (2b) illustrates the *body-possessor alternation*

This paper will focus on the properties of the agent-possessor alternation and it will compare this type of construction with Brazilian Portuguese passives.

2. The agent-possessor alternation: general properties

- Agent-possessor alternation displays a set of properties that we will describe in this section.

2.1 The paraphrase

- A sentence like (9) with the agent argument realized as a PP can have (10) as its paraphrase

(9) O João cortou o cabelo com o cabeleireiro.
'João had his hair cut by the hairdresser'

(10) O João fez o cabeleireiro cortar o cabelo dele.
'João had the hairdresser cut his hair'

2.2 Subjects and modifiers of alternate sentences

- The subject of an alternate sentence does not allow the presence of an adjunct that annuls control or volition over the event:

(11) a. O funcionário xerocou o artigo do João.

'The employee photocopied João's paper'

b. O João xerocou o artigo com o funcionário **sem querer / *acidentalmente*.

Literally: 'The João photocopied the paper with the employee *not deliberately / accidentally*'
'João had his paper photocopied by the employee deliberately'

(12) a. O rapaz lavou o carro da Maria.

'The boy washed Maria's car'

b. A Maria lavou o carro com o rapaz **sem querer / *acidentalmente*.

Literally: The Maria washed the car with the boy *not deliberately / accidentally*'
'Maria had her car washed by the boy deliberately'

(13) a. O médico operou o nariz do João.

'The doctor operated on João's nose.'

b. O João operou o nariz com o médico **sem querer / *acidentalmente*.

Literally: The João operated the nose with the doctor *not deliberately / accidentally*'
'João had his nose operated on by the doctor deliberately'

(14) a. O dentista extraiu o dente do João.

'The dentist extracted João's tooth'

b. O João extraiu o dente com o dentista **sem querer / *acidentalmente*.

Literally: The João extract the tooth with the dentist *not deliberately / accidentally*'
'João had his tooth extracted by the dentist deliberately'

(15) a. A corretora vendeu a casa da família.

'The real estate broker sold the family's house.'

b. A família vendeu a casa com a corretora **sem querer / *acidentalmente*.

Literally: The family sold the house with the real estate broker *not deliberately / accidentally*'
'The family had her house sold by the real estate broker deliberately'

Summary

Properties of the subject of the examples (b) above:

- some kind of agentivity;
- it is a kind of indirect agent who permits another agent to act in his place and
- this phenomenon allows both agents to be syntactically present in the sentence (the subject and the *com*-phrase)

2.3 Semantic nature of the verb

- Agent-possessor alternation is derived from verbs with the following semantic properties:
 - a) The agent-possessor type verbs are causative constructions → an event that denotes two sub-events;
 - b) The agent-possessor type verbs must be “result verbs” (Rappaport and Levin 2010) and
 - c) The agent-possessor sentence must have an agent in the external argument position

(16) *Semantic structure of agent-possessor type verbs*
v: [AGENT] CAUSE [Y BE <RESULT>]²

2.4 Pragmatic constraint

- The verb *rasgar* (‘to tear’) has the semantic structure in (16), but unexpectedly the possessor-agent alternation is not possible with it:

- (17) a. O João rasgou o caderno do Paulo.
‘João tore Paulo’s notebook’
b. *O Paulo rasgou o caderno (com o João).
Literally: ‘Paulo tore the notebook (with João)’

Question

Why is this so?

Answer: after we reach the condition in (16), there is still a pragmatic condition that must be satisfied:

- (18) *Pragmatic constraint on the possessor-agent alternation*
The possessor-agent alternation is only allowed if it is possible to infer from the VP a kind of action that a person usually asks someone else, an expert, to do for him/her; otherwise, the alternation fails.

To illustrate (18), let us see the examples in (19)³:

- (19) a. Dalila cortou os cabelos de Sansão.
‘Delilah cut Samson’s hair’
b. Sansão cortou o cabelo com Dalila.
Literally: ‘Samson cut the hair with Delilah’

The sentence (19a) is grammatical and interpretable, but (19b) describes an event completely different from what it is known from the Bible story about Samson and Delilah. In the Bible scenario, (19b) is pragmatically odd.

After presenting the basic properties of the possessor-agent alternation, in the next section we will focus on the passives of Portuguese and their properties.

² This category *RESULT* is too wide and must refer to many kinds of results.

³ Examples taken from Ilari and Franchi (1994).

3. Portuguese passives: an overview

3.1 Canonic and non-canonical passives in Portuguese

- Portuguese has two types of passives: the canonical passives (20) and the non-canonical passives (21):

(20) Os carros do João foram consertados pelo Paulo.

Literally: 'The cars of-the João were fixed by-the Paulo'
'João's cars were fixed by Paulo'

(21) O João teve os carros consertados / roubados pelo Paulo.

Literally: 'The João had the cars fixed / stolen by-the Paulo'
'João's cars were fixed / stolen by Paulo'

- Three properties are shared by these two types of passives:

a) A PP headed by the preposition *por* ('by') may be optionally used to realize the external argument:

(22) *O furacão* destruiu a casa da Maria.

'The hurricane destroyed Maria's house'

(23) a. A casa da Maria foi destruída [*pelo furacão*].

'Maria's house was destroyed by the hurricane'

b. A Maria teve a casa destruída [*pelo furacão*].

Literally: 'The Maria had the house destroyed by-the hurricane'
'Maria's house was destroyed by the hurricane'

b) There is agreement (gender and number) between the past participle and the internal argument:

(24) O estudante leu os poemas de uma escritora famosa.

'The student read the poems by a famous writer'

(25) a. [Os poemas]_{MASC/PL} de [uma escritora famosa]_{FEM/SG} foram lidos_{MASC/PL} pel[o estudante]_{MASC/SG}.
'The poems by a famous writer were read by the student'

b. [Uma escritora famosa]_{FEM/SG} teve [os poemas]_{MASC/PL} lidos_{MASC/PL} pel[o estudante]_{MASC/SG}.
Literally: 'A famous writer had the poems read by the student'
'The poems by a famous writer were read by the student'

c) The participle must be formed from a transitive verb

(26) Canonical passives

a. O técnico *consertou* o computador do Pedro. (transitive verb)
'The technician fixed Pedro's computer'

b. O computador do Pedro foi *consertado* pelo técnico.
Pedro's computer was fixed by the technician

c. A filha da Ana chorou. (unergative)
'Ana's daughter cried'

d. *A filha da Ana foi chorada.
Literally: 'Ana's daughter was cried'

e. Os documentos do meu pai chegaram. (unaccusative)
'The documents of my father arrived'

f. *Os documentos do meu pai foram chegados.
'The documents of my father were arrived'

(27) Non-canonical passives

- a. O técnico *consertou* o computador do Pedro. (transitive verb)
'The technician fixed Pedro's computer'
- b. O Pedro teve o computador *consertado* pelo técnico.
Literally: 'The Pedro had the computer fixed by-the technician'
'Pedro's computer was fixed by the technician'
- c. A filha da Ana chorou. (unergative)
'Ana's daughter cried'
- d. *A Ana teve a filha chorada.
Literally: 'Ana had the daughter cried'
- e. Os documentos do meu pai chegaram. (unaccusative)
'The documents of my father arrived'
- f. *O meu pai teve os documentos chegados.
Literally: 'The my father had the documents arrived'

3.2 Non canonical passives: properties

- Non canonical passives in Portuguese have the following properties which distinguish them from canonical passives.

3.2.1 The auxiliary

- The auxiliary verb used in non-canonical passives is *ter* ('to have'), contrasting with canonical passives which employ *ser* ('to be') as the auxiliary:

- (28) a. A Maria *teve* a história de vida contada a todos pelo escritor.
Literally: 'The Maria had the history of life told to everyone by-the writer'
'Maria's history of life was told to everyone by the writer'
- b. *A Maria *foi* a história de vida contada a todos pelo escritor.

3.2.2 The semantic relationship between arguments

- The subject and the internal argument of the participle can bear a variety of semantic relation:

- (29) a. *O Pedro* teve a casa destruída pelo fogo. (alienable possession)
'Pedro's house was destroyed by the fire'
- b. *A menina* teve a vida salva pelo médico. (inalienable possession)
'The girl's life was saved by the doctor'
- c. *O homem* teve a esposa resgatada pelo policial. (relational noun)
'The man's wife was rescued by the policeman'
- d. *O meu carro* teve a pintura arranhada pelo meu vizinho. (whole-part)
'The paint on my car was scratched by my neighbor'
- e. *A casa da Ana* teve a construção interrompida pelos pedreiros. ("complementation")
'The construction of the house of Ana was interrupted by the bricklayers'

3.2.3 The affectedness of the subject

- The subject of a non-canonical passive is somehow affected by the predicate described by the participle:

- (30) a. A atriz teve a vida *destruída* pelas drogas. (negative affectedness)
'The life of the actress was destroyed by the drugs'
- b. A atriz teve a vida totalmente *mudada* pela chegada do bebê. (positive affectedness)
'The life of the actress was completely changed by the arrival of the baby'
- (31) a. O jovem teve as mãos *cortadas* pelo vidro. (negative affectedness)
'The hands of the teenager were cut by the glass'
- b. O jovem teve as mãos *tratadas* pela enfermeira. (positive affectedness)
'The hands of the teenager were treated by the nurse'

Conclusion

The facts presented in 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 lead us to raise the hypothesis that non-canonical passives involve some kind of possessor raising.

3.2.4 The obligatory nature of possessor raising

- The subject of a non-canonical passive must be possessor-raised:

(32) [A indústria] poluiu [as águas do rio].

‘The industry polluted the waters of the river’

(33) a. [O rio] teve [as águas] poluídas pela indústria.

b. *Teve [o rio] [as águas] poluídas pela indústria.

c. *Teve [as águas do rio] poluídas pela indústria.

d. *Teve poluídas [as águas do rio] pela indústria.

e. *Teve poluídas pela indústria [as águas do rio].

‘The waters of the river were polluted by the industry’

(34) a. [As águas do rio] foram poluídas pela indústria

b. Foram poluídas [as águas do rio] pela indústria.

c. Foi poluído [as águas do rio] pela indústria.

d. Foram poluídas pela indústria [as águas do rio].

e. Foi poluído pela indústria [as águas do rio].

f. %[O rio] foi [as águas] poluídas pel[a indústria].

g. *[O rio] foram [as águas] poluídas pel[a indústria].

h. *Foi [o rio] [as águas] poluídas pel[a indústria].

‘The waters of the river were polluted by the industry’

- Having presented the basic properties of the three types of sentences to be analyzed here, in the next section we will present our proposal of analysis to them.

4. A unified analysis: the smuggling approach

- Let’s recapitulate...

In this paper we provide an analysis to three types of sentences of Brazilian Portuguese syntax, namely, the canonical passive (35), the non-canonical passive (36) and the agent-possessor raising alternation (37):

(35) O cabelo do João foi cortado pelo cabeleireiro.

‘João’s hair was cut by the hairdresser’

(36) O João teve o cabelo cortado pelo cabeleiro.

Literally: ‘The João had the hair cut by the hairdresser’

‘João’s hair was cut by the hairdresser’

(37) O João cortou o cabelo com o cabeleireiro.

Literally: ‘The João cut the hair with the hairdresser’

‘João had his hair cut by the hairdresser’

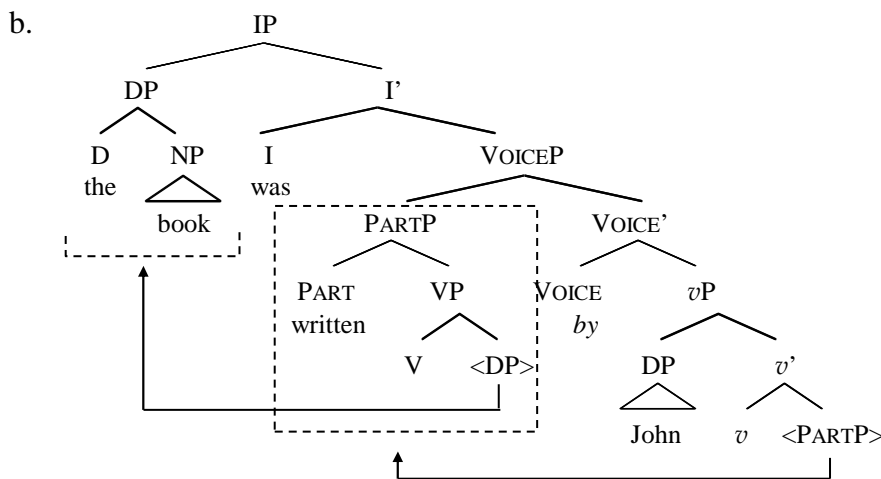
Comparing the sentences above, we arrive at the following Table, which shows interesting points of contact among them:

Sentence	Passive morphology	Possessor raising	PP agent
(35)	*	✓	✓ (<i>com</i> -phrase)
(36)	✓ (<i>ser</i> – participle)	%	✓ (<i>por</i> -phrase)
(37)	✓ (<i>ter</i> – participle)	✓	✓ (<i>por</i> -phrase)

4.1 The smuggling approach (Collins 2005)

- To the derivations we will propose to the sentences under study, we will adopt Collins' (2005) smuggling approach, according to which, (38a), a passive sentence in English, is derived as (38b):

(38) a. The book was written by John.



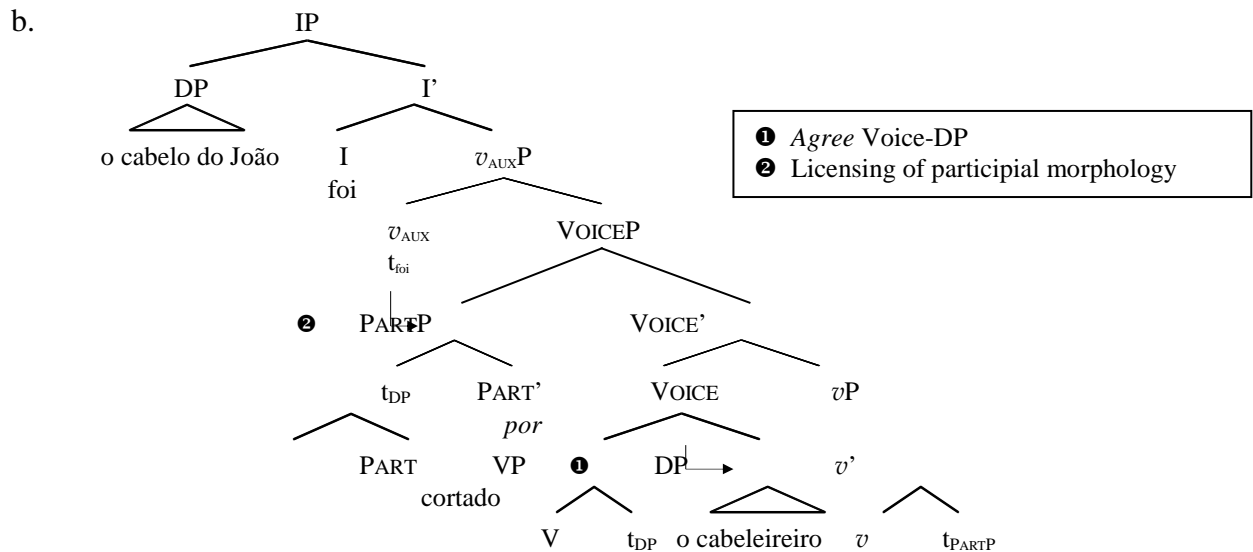
Collins' (2005) system

- the *vP* domain is formed like in an active sentence;
- the *v* head of this domain cannot value Accusative case;
- passives have a projection VOICEP headed by the preposition *by*;
- by* values the case feature of the external argument of *v*;
- PARTP moves to specifier position of VOICEP bringing with it the internal argument (*smuggling*) and
- being at the specifier of VoiceP, the internal argument is available to agree with T and being Case-licensed.

4.2 The derivation of canonical passives

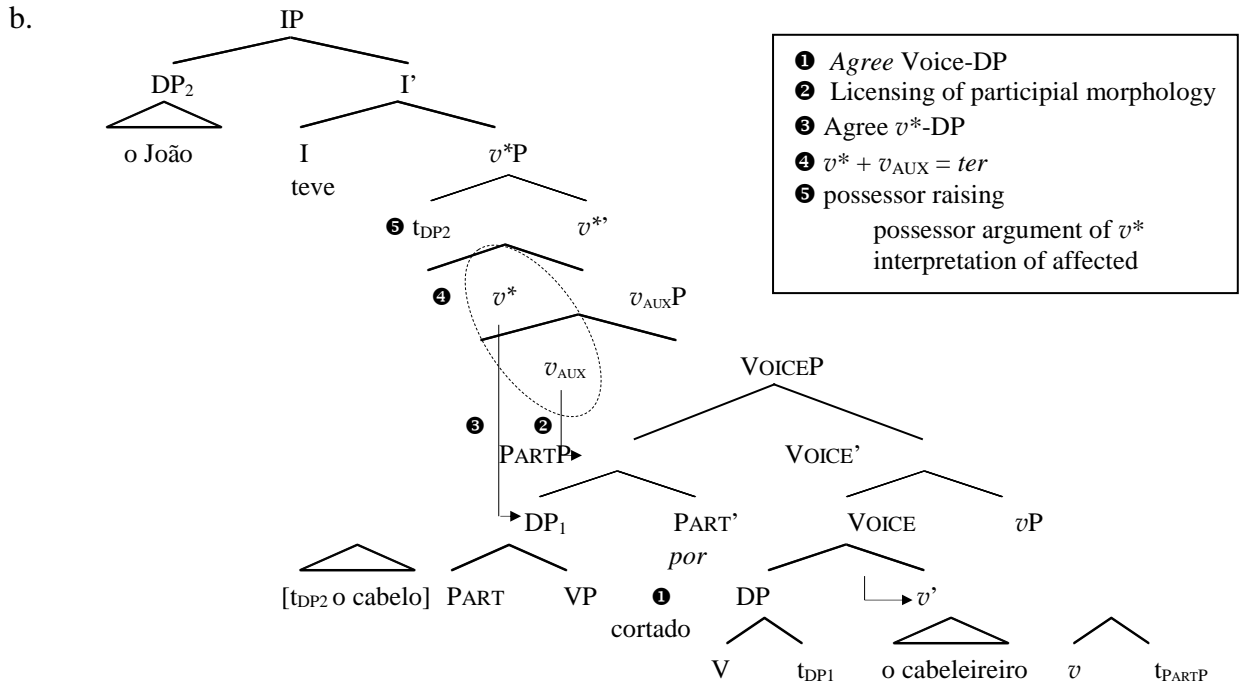
- The derivation of canonical passives will proceed as Collins (2005) proposes. The only differences are the presence of a projection to the auxiliary verb *ser* (called here *vP*, following Roberts 2010, Biberauer and Roberts 2010) and the movement of the internal argument to the specifier position of PARTP.
- The derivation of (39a) is (39b):

(39) a. O cabelo do João foi cortado pelo cabeleireiro.
 'João's hair was cut by the hairdresser'



4.3 The derivation of non-canonical passives

- In the derivation of non-canonical passives, we will assume that:
 - Canonical and non-canonical are derivationally related
 - There is a derivational step common to both structures → similarities of them.
 - Canonical and non-canonical passives share the same derivation up to the moment the auxiliary is inserted.
 - The difference between canonical and non-canonical passives has to do with the presence of a functional head (call it v^*)
 - It assigns a “theta-role” (the interpretation of affected) → possessor raising
 - It values Case
- The derivation of (40a) is (40b):
 - (40) a. O João teve o cabelo cortado pelo cabeleireiro.
 - Literally: ‘The João had the hair cut by the hairdresser’
 - ‘João’s hair was cut by the hairdresser’



- The consequences of this approach of non-canonical passives to auxiliary verb *ter* are the following:
 - It not a primitive verb, but an element created by syntactic processes (Kayne 1993, Kempchinsky 1996 and Torrego 2002) and
 - It is a kind of “transitive auxiliary” (Hoekstra 1984, 1994, 1996; Lois 1990; den Dikken 1994)

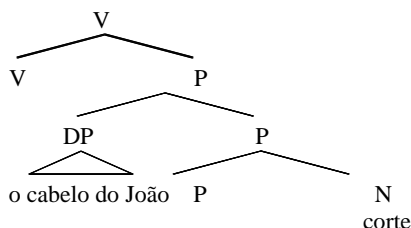
4.4 The derivation of agent-possessor alternation

- In the derivation of agent-possessor alternation, we will adopt the following assumptions:
 - The smuggling approach;
 - Differently from passives → there is no PARTP projection;
 - there is no $v_{AUX}P$ and
 - the head of Voice is the preposition *com*
- Similarly to non-canonical passives → there is a v^*P
 - case valuation
 - theta role assignment (“indirect agent” interpretation)
 - obligatory possessor raising

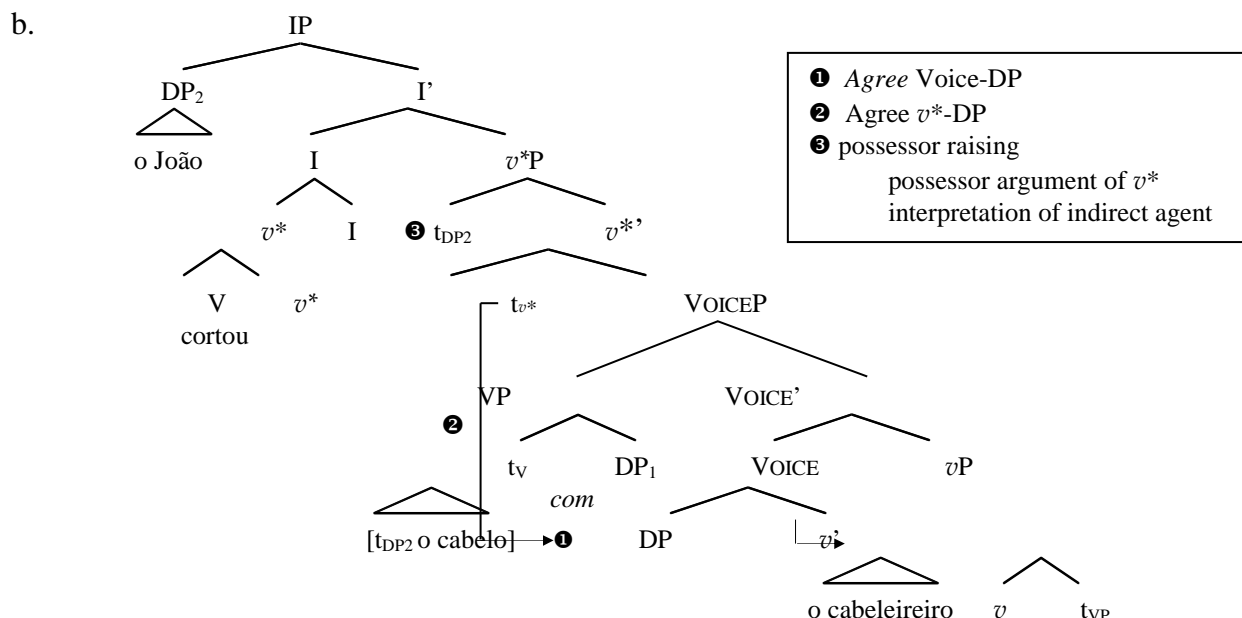
- The derivation of (41a) is (41b)⁴:

⁴ In the representation of the verb involved in the agent possessor alternation we simply say that it is a V. It is a simplified notation. Caçado (2010a,b) and Caçado and Negrão (2010) argue in favor of a refined I-syntax for the verbs involved in this type of alternation. Following Hale and Keyser (2002), they propose that verbs like *cortar* ‘to cut’ are denominal verbs derived through the conflation of an abstract noun into a P and the conflation of the resulting complex into a V:

(i) The I-syntax of *cortar*



- (41) a. O João cortou o cabelo com o cabeleireiro.
Literally: 'The João cut the hair cut with the hairdresser'
'João had his hair cut by the hairdresser'



5. Final remarks

- We showed that Brazilian Portuguese has two different possessor raising structures: the agent-possessor alternation and the body-possessor alternation. It was offered a description of the syntactic and semantic properties of one of these possessor raising structures: the agent-possessor alternation.
- We presented two patterns of passive sentences of Brazilian Portuguese (the canonical and the non-canonical passives) and their properties.
- The similarities among these three structures lead us to propose a unified analysis for them. The details of this analysis are illustrated in the following Table:

DERIVATION	STRUCTURE		
	<i>agent-possessor</i>	<i>canonical passive</i>	<i>non-canonical passive</i>
VOICEP	headed by <i>com</i>	headed by <i>por</i>	headed by <i>por</i>
movement to spec-VOICEP	VP	PARTP	PARTP
$v_{AUX}P$	-	✓ (<i>ser</i>)	✓ (<i>ter</i> : <i>ser</i> + v^*P)
v^*P	✓	-	✓
possessor raising	obligatory	?optional	obligatory

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