Main syntactic changes from a principle-and-parameters view

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I. Introduction

Although the first available documents written in Portuguese are more recent than is the case for many other European languages and although, when the language first appears in texts, (Old) Portuguese already looks much closer to its modern descendant than Old French or Old English do, the language born in the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula still offers, in its development, a very useful case study for students of language change. In this chapter, we will propose a description and analysis, framed in the principle-and-parameters framework of generative grammar, of the major syntactic changes found in Portuguese from the first texts of the late 12th century to the modern grammars of its two most widely spoken current varieties, Modern European Portuguese and Modern Brazilian Portuguese. In discussing these changes, we will depart from the traditional historical point of view and, rather than considering the surviving texts of the older language as our objects of inquiry, we will treat them as evidence, necessarily indirect, of the grammars of their authors. This move from observable data to the underlying grammatical system that guided the production of that data is inspired by the shift proposed by Chomsky (1986) from E-Language to I-Language. By E-language Chomsky intended to evoke External and Extensional language, that is, observable data, and by I-Language he meant Internal and Intensional language, that is, the system of grammatical knowledge by virtue of which people can be speakers of a given language. I-Languages constitute the knowledge attained by children in the course of language acquisition. They correspond, therefore, to parametrizations of the Faculty of language in which the choice points that allow for cross-linguistic variability are given fixed values. In what follows, we further adopt the approach to the theory of parameters originally proposed by Hagit Borer, the so-called “Borer-Chomsky” conjecture, according to which the loci of parametric variability in grammar are the grammatical feature contents of the functional projections (Tense, Aspect, Definiteness, etc.) that control syntactic structure. Our aim in this essay will be to describe the successive I-languages that
underlie the Portuguese E-languages as manifested in the written texts that constitute its historical record. The succession of I-languages that we will present are defined by a specific sequence of parametric changes and the texts we examine contain our evidence for the character of the grammatical parameters involved and the timing of the changes in their settings.

One important aspect of our approach is that there is no necessary one-to-one connection between texts and grammars. A text can be a locus where more than one grammar is expressed, hence diglossic, and in the course of a change such diglossic variation can characterize a body of texts over an extended period of time. To be precise, a particular instance of variation in morphosyntactic form found in texts can have two sources. On the one hand, it can be produced by a single grammar, as when authors vary between the active and the passive voice or between canonical word order and the topicalized or scrambled placement of verbal complements. On the other hand, the observed variation may reflect the competition between two grammars, that is, two different parameter settings. Among other advantages, the notion of grammar competition (cf. Kroch 2001) allows us to reconcile the point of view that grammatical changes must be abrupt, since they arise in the individual when language acquirers change the setting of some parameter, with the fact that such changes, as manifested in texts, normally exhibit text-internal variation and take several generations to go to completion.

Our essay is organized as follows. Section II reformulates the traditional periodization of European Portuguese on the basis of the shift in perspective from E-language to I-language. We then propose that the main syntactic features of the grammatical evolution of Portuguese from the first written texts to modern European Portuguese can be accounted for as a succession of three different grammars and we discuss the parameters involved in this succession. In section III we describe the main changes that characterize the syntactic history of Brazilian Portuguese as it diverges from European Portuguese and discuss what parameters will best account for the changes. In Section IV, we summarize our findings and make some concluding remarks.

II. Parametric changes in European Portuguese

II. 1. The periodization issue or “How many stages are there in the history of Portuguese?”
The traditional periodization of Portuguese (cf. Mattos e Silva 1994 for a survey) acknowledges three main periods: *Old Portuguese* (henceforth OP), from the first remaining manuscripts of the beginning of the 12th century to the first half of the 16th century, *Classical Portuguese* (henceforth ClP), up to the 18th century and *Modern European Portuguese* (henceforth EP) from 1800 on. In addition, several scholars divide OP into *Galego-Portuguese* (GP), up to the end of the 14th century, and *Middle Portuguese* (henceforth MP), from roughly 1400 to the first half of the 16th century. The basis for this division is primarily socio-historical but is also grounded in linguistic characteristics, mostly phonological and morphological, since these two levels sharply differentiate GP and part of MP from the subsequent periods (see CHAPTER 1, HISTORY AND CURRENT SETTING). MP can be thought of as the period in which the peculiarities of OP gradually disappear from texts.

When we turn to the syntax, given our perspective, we have two tasks: first to discover the grammars that underlie the texts and then to determine how the parameter settings defining them change over time. Note that, since we believe that grammar change occurs abruptly and then spreads, we should define periods not by the disappearance of archaic phenomena but by the appearance of innovations, since the latter signal the emergence of a new grammar. Along these lines, Galves, Namiuti and Paixão de Sousa (2006) proposed that the history of European Portuguese has three grammatical stages.¹ It begins with the grammar that underlies the Old (or Galego-) Portuguese texts. Then, at a certain point, a new grammar appears, giving rise to a long period of morphosyntactic variation, the period traditionally known as Middle Portuguese. The purest expression of this new grammar is found in the texts of the following Classical Portuguese (ClP) period, by which time the OP grammar has died out. The final stage begins when a further new grammar emerges, yielding a new competition. This grammar is the one underlying Modern European Portuguese (EP).

The main difference between our periodization and the traditional one, which also recognizes three periods, is that MP is no longer to be thought of as “late” OP and becomes instead “early” ClP because MP is now analyzed as exhibiting a competition between the grammar of OP and the new ClP grammar. In our view, the latter is probably already the grammar of the vernacular language when variation first appears in texts. We should note that, since we consider MP to be nothing but a competition in use between the grammars of OP and ClP, the latter must, for us, begin
to manifest itself in texts much sooner than claimed by the tradition. For the subsequent transition from CIP to EP, the surviving data is much more extensive than for the earlier period and several recent studies based on the Tycho Brahe Corpus show clearly that EP first emerges in the writings of authors born after 1700 (Galves et al. 2005a; Antonelli 2011; among others). We discuss the evolution of this stage in section II.3 below.

II.2 The changes from OP to CIP

In discussing the development from OP to CIP, we concentrate on word order evidence, specifically clitic placement, scrambling, and the position of the verb, since those phenomena have been well studied, both empirically and theoretically. ² With regard to clitic placement, it is important to remember that certain aspects of the phenomenon remain constant, at least on the surface, throughout the history of Portuguese on the European continent. For one thing, clitics may never appear as proclitics on a verb in first position in a root sentence. On the other hand, there are contexts of obligatory proclisis which never change or vary (see CHAPTER 12, CLITICS: PHONOLOGY, MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX), for example in tensed subordinate clauses. Non-V1 main clauses, unless the sentence contains preverbal elements that force proclisis, are the main context of historical variation. There clitics are predominantly postverbal in OP, as in example (1), and predominantly preverbal in CIP, as in example (2) below.

(1) é Móór eanes oblígousé a dar os filhus a outorga (NO, 1273)
    and Moor Eanes obliged-SE to give to. the sons the donation
    (Martins 1994: 60, ex. 25)

(2) O brâmene lhe deu por isso seus agradecimentos,
    The braman to.him gave for that his thanks,
    ‘The Brahmin thanked him for that’, (Pinto, born 1510)

Additionally, in a phenomenon known as “interpolation,” we find in older Portuguese that embedded-clause preverbal clitics can be separated from the verb by intervening phrases. In OP the phrase can be of any syntactic function, including the subject (example (3)) but by the time of CIP only negation survives as an interpolatable element (example (4)).
(3) assy como **vola** os ditos Moesteyros derô e outorgarô (NO, 1285)
as well as to.you.it the said Monasteries gave and donate
(Martins 1994: 172, ex. 192)

(4) disse que **lij** nô enbargava a meyadade (NO, 1289)
(Martins 1994: 162, ex. 3)
said that to.him not seized the half

Although we do find isolated examples of interpolation of other elements as late as
the 16\textsuperscript{th} century, late examples are probably remnants of the competition between OP
and CIP in the texts. Some examples may reflect a third type of interpolation,
restricted to pronouns and a few adverbs (cf. Magro 2008), which lasted until the 20\textsuperscript{th}
century in dialectal Portuguese. Significantly, interpolation in OP is possible only in
clauses where proclisis is obligatory, while in CIP the interpolation of negation is
possible in any non-V1 clause (Namiuti 2008):

(5) **Dom Manoel de Lima** o não quiz ouvir naquele negócio (Couto, born1542)
Dom Manoel de Lima him not wanted to hear in that business

Significantly, OP exhibits scrambling, a word order effect under which the (nominal,
clausal or verbal) complement of a main verb is displaced to the verb’s left, as
illustrated in (6). Such scrambling is always optional (compare (6) and (7)). Here are
examples from 13\textsuperscript{th} century legal documents (Martins 2005: 182):

(6) **sse pela uêtujra uos alguê a dita vêa enbargar**
if by chance you-DAT someone the mentioned vineyard blocks

(7) **sse pela uêtujra uos alguê enbargar a dita vêa**
if by chance you-DAT someone blocks the mentioned vineyard

‘and if by chance someone blocks the vineyard from you’

Following work on clitic placement in other medieval Romance languages (cf.
Cardinaletti and Roberts 2003 among others),\textsuperscript{3} Martins (1994, 2005) proposes that in
OP, the enclitic position of the pronoun is derived by movement of the verb across the
position that hosts the clitic. She argues that the verb moves to a high functional
category, Sigma (Σ), which encodes polarity. According to this author, Σ is strong in OP and, as such, must be lexicalized. When C or NEG or some polarity marking item is not present, the verb fulfills this requirement by moving to Σ, leaving the clitic in a string-wise postverbal position.

In discussing the structural position of clitics, Martins asserts that they land in the specifier of AgrSP, which in OP carries an EPP feature and allows multiple Specs. It is this multiple spec property that licenses interpolation in cases like (3) and (4) above. “Because clitics are minimal/maximal entities (Chomsky 1994, 1995), clitic movement may target either a head or a Spec position. If the latter option is taken, clitics move into the same domain as non-clitic scrambled objects, that is Spec of AgrS. (...) [I]nterpolation (i.e. non adjacency between the clitic and the verb) is derived with the clitic placed in the outer Spec,AgrSP while scrambled objects or the subject occupy ‘embedded’ Spec positions in the AgrS domain” (Martins 2005: 176).

Martins (1994) points out that as early as the 13th century, some cases of proclisis are found in the absence of any polarity sensitive element, the phenomenon that becomes dominant in the CIP period. This option, she claims, is be to explained by the clitic’s ability to head-adjoin to Σ when the latter hosts the verb.

The dual nature of clitics as heads and as maximal projections explains another sort of variation in OP: the optionality of interpolation, as illustrated by the existence of sentences like (8), to be compared with (3) above:

(8) ca elle o octorgava (NO, 1277)
   because he CL.ACC.3 donated
   ‘because he donated it’
   (Martins 1994: 191, ex. 329)

In both (8) and (3), according to Martins, Σ is occupied by a conjunction (‘ca’ and ‘sse’, respectively) and the verb is in AgrS. But while the clitic is adjoined as a head to AgrS in (8), it moves as a phrase to the edge of Spec,AgrS in (3). According to the analysis presented above, interpolation and scrambling are lost together because “AgrS loses the ability to select multiple Specs” (Martins 2005: 186).

The decline of enclisis in CIP cannot be derived from the loss of V-to-Σ, since the verb continues to move to a high position (see section II.3 below). The fact that proclisis
becomes more and more frequent in contexts where enclisis had been dominant indicates that in CIP enclisis is no longer ever a consequence of V-movement. Since enclisis does not disappear from European Portuguese, in contrast to the other Romance languages (see, for example, Fontana 1993 for Spanish), the grammars underlying both OP and CIP produce both enclisis and proclisis, but they do so partially by different means and at different rates in usage, which are detectable in texts. In both OP and CIP, a prosodic requirement, the so-called Tobler-Mussafia Law (Salvi 1991; Galves et al. 2005a; Galves and Sandalo 2012), bars clitics from appearing at the left edge of an Intonational Phrase and forces enclisis in V1 root sentences. In OP, however, enclisis is characteristic even in non-V1 sentences and thus must result largely from verb movement to a high position. In CIP, on the other hand, enclisis serves only to fulfill the prosodic requirement.

To locate the verb in a high enough position in root clauses in OP to account for the dominance of enclitic placement, Martins places it in $\Sigma$ but other researchers have argued that its position is just C, and, therefore, that OP is a kind of V2 language (Salvi 1991; Ribeiro 1995). Their claim is supported by the high frequency of sentences in which a non-subject precedes the verb, with the subject either following the verb or being null (Ribeiro 1995: 99). Sentences (9) and (10) illustrate the orders OVS and XVSO, orders typical of V2 languages. In addition, the adverb in (9) follows the subject, suggesting that the postverbal subject, and consequently the verb to its left, are in a high position (cf. the discussion in Section II.3 below):

(9)   E esta vertude de paceença ouve este santo monge Libertino mui compridamente (DSG 1.5.5)
     and this virtue of patience had this holly monk Libertino very fully

(10)  Com estas e outras taaes rrazoões arrefeçeo el-rei de sua brava sanha
     For these and other such reasons cooled-down the King from his brave fierceness (CDP.7.62-63)

     Ribeiro (1995: 100, ex. h,q)

A significant problem for a V2 analysis of OP, however, is that the texts contain large numbers of V1 and V3 sentences along with the expected V2 cases (cf. Sitaridou 2012 among others). Indeed, in root clauses, Ribeiro herself reports about 20% V1 clauses and 15% V2 clauses in her 13th and 14th century texts. Still, since V-to-C, even in the Germanic languages, can be grammatically independent of the
movement of a phrase to Spec, CP, the data remains consistent with a V-to-C requirement or at least with a required movement to a position higher than Tense. We will see in the next section that some such movement requirement must have survived into CIP.

Summarizing the discussion to this point, the changes in word order from OP to CIP can be said to follow from a parametric change in the properties of the functional head AgrS, which loses its capacity to license multiple Specs. Hence, a single parameter change explains the loss both of scrambling and of interpolation. Moreover, the evolution of clitic placement is a by-product of this change, given the plausible assumption that interpolation was the main evidence for learners of the movement of clitics as phrases to the edge of AgrSP. As the surface position of clitics becomes more and more frequently compatible with ordinary head movement, the way opens for learners to reanalyze both proclisis and enclisis as outputs of a post-syntactic (that is, morphological) rule governing the placement of the clitic at the left versus right edge of the verb, independently of the verb’s syntactic position. Enclisis remains in the language as a morphophonological requirement, the Tobler-Mussafia law, which bars clitics in first position in an intonational phrase. We see this result clearly in CIP, where, in non-V1 sentences, enclisis is frequent only when the constituent preceding the verb is prosodically heavy enough to form an separate intonational phrase, a dependent clause or a conjoined phrase (cf. Galves et al. 2005a), being marginal when preverbal phrases are subjects (cf. figure 1 in the next section below), adverbs or simple PPs. Some exceptions can be found, as in the case of Vieira’s Sermons, where enclisis reaches 52% of the cases. The fact that in all such enclitic sentences in the sermons, the preverbal phrase receives the interpretation of a contrastive topic (Galves 2002) reinforces the idea that clitic-placement is sensitive to prosody, since contrastive topics tend to be associated with an independent prosodic contour (cf. Frascarelli and Hinterholzl 2007).

II.3 The changes from CIP to EP

We consider that three main syntactic changes constitute the transition from CIP to EP. The first again concerns clitic placement. As shown by Galves et al. (2005a), in the same contexts where proclisis replaces enclisis from OP to CIP, enclisis replaces proclisis from CIP to EP, in a gradual evolution beginning in texts written by authors born in the first quarter of the 18th century and arriving at
completion one and a half centuries later. The second change affects the position of subjects and begins with the same generation of authors, whose texts manifest an abrupt drop in the frequency of VS word order (Galves and Paixão de Sousa 2013). Figure 1 traces the evolution of the two changes.

Figure 1: Comparative evolution of VS order (vs. SV order) and of enclisis with preverbal subjects, i.e., S-Vcl (vs. S-clV)

Figure 1 shows the rise of enclisis with preverbal subjects (black diamonds) and the decline of VS word order (grey triangles) in 16 authors born from 1502 to 1836, with each point corresponding to the author’s birth date. Before 1700, the frequency of enclisis with preverbal subjects ranges from 0 to 18%, with an overall mean of 6% for the 16th and 17th centuries combined. These figures ignore its high frequency (52%) in the sermons of Padre Vieira, which we believe to be a consequence of his special style (see above). Over the same time span, VS appears with a frequency ranging from 36% to 77%, with an overall mean of 56% for the same two centuries. After 1700, the frequency of enclisis with preverbal subjects gradually increases, reaching 97% by the middle of the 19th century, while the frequency of VS drops abruptly to a stable mean of approximately 25% for the entire course of the 18th and 19th centuries.
With regard to the change in the position of subjects, we observe changes not only in the frequency of VS, but also in its interpretation. Galves and Gibrail (2015) show that in CIP texts, in contrast to EP (cf. Costa 2004), postverbal subjects may receive a non-focal interpretation, as illustrated in (11):

(11) e sendo este negócio dos maiores, que podia ter uma Monarquia, o fiou and being this deal of the greatest, that could have a Monarchy, it entrusted

o animoso Rei inteiramente da inteligência e indústria de um só homem;
the brave king entirely to the intelligence and industry of a only man

‘and being among the greatest of deals which could have a Monarchy, the brave king entrusted it entirely to the intelligence and industry of just one man’

Here the focus of the sentence is ‘da inteligência e indústria de um só homem’, while the postverbal subject receives a “familiar topic” interpretation, since the king has already been mentioned several times and is one of the established characters in the narrative. This usage, which is extremely frequent in texts written by authors born in the 16th and 17th centuries, suggests that postverbal subjects in CIP can occupy a high position in the clause, to the left of the right peripheral domain associated with normal focus assignment. This behavior is accounted for if we adopt the hypothesis, put forward by several scholars (cf. Antonelli 2011, among others), that in CIP the verb raises to the C domain in main clauses, leaving the subject behind it in the specifier of Tense. This analysis is supported by the fact postverbal subjects can precede manner and other VP peripheral adverbs, as in the Germanic languages. Example (11) above illustrates this phenomenon in the placement of the adverb ‘inteiramente’.

Our analysis assigns to CIP a syntactic property typical of V2 languages, namely leftward movement of the verb to a position in the C domain. However, as in OP, verb movement to C in CIP is not always accompanied by the movement of any phrase to Spec,CP. Galves and Paixão de Sousa (2013) argue that Portuguese, unlike the Germanic V2 languages, allows Spec,CP to remain empty. In the Germanic V2 languages, movement to Spec,CP derives from two different sources: one is the presence of a formal feature in C that forces movement as a last resort in every matrix declarative clause and the other is a discourse-related feature that triggers movement under certain information structural conditions (Light 2012). In CIP and arguably in
OP, the only licensor of XP-movement to Spec,CP is the discourse-related feature. In the absence of a discourse motivation, no phrase moves to the preverbal position and the verb remains initial. If our analysis is on the right track, the observed decline of VS in the transition from ClP to EP must reflect the loss of V-to-C, as it is clear that the modern language lacks general V-to-C movement.

Another innovation in EP appears at the end of the 18th century (Andrade, 2015). It is illustrated in (12) and (13), and concerns what Raposo (2004) calls “null object constructions.” It consists in the option for a definite pronominal object to be replaced by a null category, both in clauses with canonical word order (12b) and in topic-first sentences (13b). The latter case is so-called “Topicalization,” whose existence distinguishes EP from the other Romance languages, where null objects are restricted to indefinite or generic interpretations and where fronted objects not doubled by clitics are interpreted as foci and not as topics.

(12)  a. Eu só o encontrei na FNAC.
        I only it found in-the FNAC.
   b. Eu só encontrei __ na FNAC.
        I only found __ at the FNAC.

(13)  a. Esse livro, eu só o encontrei na FNAC.
        this book, I only it found in-the FNAC.
   b. Esse livro, eu só encontrei __ na FNAC.
        this book, I only found __ at the FNAC.

Andrade (2015) claims that the rise of Topicalization in EP is another consequence of the loss of V-to-C. He shows that from an information structural perspective, the construction continues the Germanic-style discourse-related V2 construction of ClP. Both alternate with Clitic Left-Dislocation and do so at the same rate. He concludes that the loss of V-to-C movement simply replaced TOP VS with TOP SV. As for null objects, according to Raposo (1986), they are bound by a null topic at the left edge of the sentence. It is tempting, therefore, to also derive the fronting of null objects in EP from the loss of V-to-C. Such a connection would account for the fact that no cases of null topics, i.e. null objects, have so far been found in texts of the ClP period. This property, however, cannot be straightforwardly imputed to V2 topicalization, since the V2 Germanic languages often do allow for
null topics with definite reference. Additionally, English, which is not a V2 language, allows Topicalization but does not license null topics, showing that the correlation does not obtain in the other direction either. We leave this interesting issue for further research.

Thus, it is clear that the most important parametric difference between ClP and EP is the loss of V-to-C in declarative sentences. At the same time, the change in clitic placement between ClP and EP cannot be said to follow from this parameter difference, since, as we have said, enclisis in CIP reflects only a prosodic constraint (the Tobler-Mussafia Law), and is independent of verb movement. Galves et al. (2005a) and Galves and Sandalo (2012) argue that the prosodic constraint no longer holds in EP. One clear piece of evidence for this change in the character of the constraint governing enclisis is a loss in sensitivity to the length of preverbal clauses in sentences in which the verb immediately follows a dependent clause. Before 1700, short preverbal clauses, those less likely to constitute independent Intonational Phrases, are somewhat less likely to co-occur with enclitic placement than longer clauses, a difference that plausibly reflects a Tobler-Mussafia type prosodic effect. After 1700, however, there is no appreciable difference in the likelihood of enclisis associated with the length of a preverbal clause (see the bottom row in Table 1, taken from Galves and Kroch 2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before 1700</th>
<th>After 1700</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clauses &lt;= 8 words</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clauses &gt; 8 words</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% enclisis long - % enclisis short</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Effect of preposed clause length on frequency of enclisis by period.

Working within the framework of Distributed Morphology, Galves and Sandalo (2012) propose that this loss of sensitivity to prosody results from a change in the domain of application of the restriction against Clitic-First. In CIP, the domain is prosodic (IntP), and the rule is Prosodic Inversion, which applies after the structure is linearized. In EP, the domain is syntactic (the local phase), and the rule is Lowering, which has access to syntactic structure but not to prosody.¹⁰

III. **Syntactic changes from European to Brazilian Portuguese**
According to the grammatical periodization we have proposed, there can be little
doubt that the version of Portuguese transplanted to Brazil was CIP. Although at the
very beginning of the colonization, the Portuguese of the settlers was often a minority
dialect in comparison to lingua franca versions of Tupi languages, it eventually came
to dominate throughout the country due to the joint effect of the permanent arrival of
new Portuguese settlers and of the widespread acquisition of Portuguese as a 2\textsuperscript{nd}
language, mainly by African slaves, who transmitted it as both a 1\textsuperscript{st} and as a 2\textsuperscript{nd}
language during the three centuries of the slave trade. In the following discussion, we
will present the most salient morpho-syntactic differences between Modern Brazilian
Portuguese (henceforth BP) and both CIP and EP. In Section III.4, we will address the
issue of the parameter changes responsible for these differences, which will lead us to
introduce other significant features of Brazilian Portuguese.

III.1. *Less and more agreement*

As described in CHAPTER 31, MAIN CURRENT PROCESSES OF
MORPHOSYNTACTIC VARIATION, BP displays variable verbal and nominal
agreement in contexts where it is categorical in European Portuguese, a phenomenon
that has led some to argue that BP went through a phase of creolization (Guy 1981).
The variability of verbal agreement affects both number and person and in most
regions of Brazil, the second person singular inflection is no longer part of the verbal
paradigm.\footnote{Less well analysed until recently are the agreement facts correlated with the
‘topic-oriented’ properties of BP, first described by Pontes (1987). Pontes showed
that, as in “topic-oriented” languages like Chinese, BP has sentences in which the first
constituent DP is not the subject but some locative or genitive argument, immediately
followed by the verb and its internal argument(s), as in (14) and (15):\footnote{Less well
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that, as in “topic-oriented” languages like Chinese, BP has sentences in which the first
constituent DP is not the subject but some locative or genitive argument, immediately
followed by the verb and its internal argument(s), as in (14) and (15):}}

(14) A Sarinha nasceu dois dentes
    the Sarinha was-born.SG two teeth
    ‘Sarinha has got two teeth.’

(15) Estas casas batem muito sol
    these houses strike.PL much sun
    ‘There is too much sun on this house’
The possibility of agreement between the verb and the preverbal DP in such constructions sharply distinguishes BP from both CIP and EP, where it is completely impossible (cf. Costa 2010). This sort of agreement is also found in the Portuguese spoken as a 2nd language in Mozambique (Gonçalves, 2010), suggesting that it is an result of contact with African languages.

III.2. A new pronominal system

The core facts of the BP pronominal paradigm and syntax are as follows (cf. CHAPTERS 31 MAIN CURRENT PROCESSES OF MORPHOSYNTACTIC VARIATION and 13 THE NULL SUBJECT PARAMETER AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE CLAUSE):

- Accusative and dative clitic pronouns vary with strong pronouns (16).
- Null objects tend to replace 3rd person accusative clitics (17)).
- The clitic pronouns ‘lhe’ and ‘te’ and accordingly possessive pronouns ‘teu’ and ‘seu’, vary freely in referring to the 2nd person (respectively (18) and (19)).

(16)a. Eu não te vi ontem
I not CL2 saw yesterday
b. Eu não vi você ontem
I not saw you yesterday

(17) %Eu não (o) vi
I not CL3Sg saw

‘I did not see you yesterday’

(18) Eu te/lhe dei esse livro
I CL 2/3.DAT gave this book

‘I gave you this book’

(19) Você trouxe teu/seu livro?
you brought POS2/3 book

‘Did you bring your book?’

Examples (16-19) show that clitics with third person reference disappear from the spoken language and that, consistent with the absence of the 2nd person in the verbal paradigm, the 2nd and the 3rd person forms no longer bear distinct pronominal features. Furthermore, tonic pronouns apparently bear no morphological case features, since they appear in all positions with the same form and since, in colloquial spoken BP, clitic doubling occurs between an object clitic and a strong form pronoun that is nominative in EP:
It is especially noteworthy that BP differs from CIP/EP in its clitic placement grammar. Clitics in BP can occur in absolute first position, contrasting with what is observed in all periods of the European language. Furthermore, the category to which clitics attach is different. In CIP/EP, they adjoin to the tensed verbal form, whether an auxiliary or the thematic verb, while in BP they are proclitic on the thematic verb, whether tensed or not (cf. Galves et al. 2005b. and CHAPTER 2 The Main Varieties of Portuguese: An Overview).

III.3. Fewer null subjects and more null objects

EP and BP are both null subject and null object languages ( CHAPTERS 13, 17, 31) but they differ in the grammar of these properties. Null objects are less constrained in BP than in EP, since they can be used inside syntactic islands, and are the most frequent strategy to refer back to an antecedent in discourse (Duarte 1989). Null subjects, on the other hand, are more constrained in BP than in EP, leading many researchers to argue that BP is only a Partial Null Subject language (henceforth PNS, cf. CHAPTER 13 THE NULL SUBJECT PARAMETER AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE CLAUSE). One of the characteristic properties of such PNS languages is the possibility of interpreting the null subject of a tensed clause as indeterminate in reference. This usage occurs in BP, as illustrated in the following dialogue drawn from a comic strip:

(21)a. Q: Onde está minha cueca de dinossauro?
   Where is my pants of dinosaurs
   ‘Where are my pants with dinosaurs’

   b. A: Está lavando
       is washing
       (i) ‘Somebody is washing them’
       (ii) ‘They are being washed’
Two interpretations are available for (21)b. Either the null subject is indeterminate and the null object refers to the discourse topic (i) or the null subject is interpreted as the topic itself and the sentence is a kind of passive (ii). This ambiguity is even more evident in the following example, drawn from an advertisement, where the topic (‘Tapete de Madeira’ Carpet of wood) is both the thematic subject of the unergative verb ‘encolhe’ (shrink) in b., and the thematic object of the transitive verb ‘encera’ (polish) in c.

(22)a. [Tapete de Madeira],
carpet of wood
b. [e], Não encolhe
not shrinks
c. Não encera [e],
not polishes
‘Wood carpet
It does not shrink
‘One does not need to polish it’ / ‘It does not need to be polished’

In EP, (22)c. would require the presence of indefinite/passivizing SE: “Não se encera”. Indeterminate se-constructions, as well, usually occur without ‘se’ in spoken BP, an option that is impossible in EP.

(23)a. Aqui conserta sapatos (BP)
here repair.3Sg shoes
b. Aqui conserta(m)-se sapatos (CLP/EP)
here repair.3Sg(Pl)-REFL shoes
Here shoes are repaired

The examples in (21)b., (22)c. and (23)a. are all consistent with the characterization of BP as a PNS language.

To sum up, in the process of developing in the New World, BP lost morphology: it lost the 2nd / 3rd person distinction, it lost obligatory plural agreement on nouns, and person/number agreement became variable on verbs. The language also came to avoid third person clitics and non-reflexive se-constructions. Thus, BP has
less morphology than EP and has syntactic characteristics distinct from the whole Romance family, including as it does, agreement processes typical of other families of languages, in particular Niger-Congo languages, that systematically display agreement with “non-subject” preverbal phrases (Baker 2008). Still, it retains, in contrast to Creole languages, a substantial amount of flexional morphology. Given this complex situation, even if BP was never precisely a creole, we can suppose that the intimate processes of contact that Portuguese underwent in Brazil deeply affected its syntax.¹³ In the next section, we shall see that this reflects in the nature of the parametric changes that occurred from ClP to BP.

III.4 The parametric changes from ClP to BP

The properties described above raise challenging questions for Parameter Theory. Following Pontes’ typologically based analysis, several researchers have argued that BP is a topic-oriented language (Galves 1993; Negrão 1999; Negrão e Viotti 2000). From a Borer/Chomsky-type principles and parameters perspective, this characterization must be formulated in terms of feature properties of one or more functional heads. Several proposals have been made along these lines, attributing new characteristics to Tense or Agreement or both. One idea has been that the features of the head of a clause are in some sense weak in BP, which would explain not only the variability in the morphological realization of Agreement but also the pronominal paradigm, in which the second and third person are non-distinct, as well as the peculiar properties of null subjects.¹⁴ A third property that can be accounted for in this way is the fact that, for many speakers, the subject position of tensed clauses seems to allow A-extraction, as evidenced by the grammaticality of hyper-raising, as in (24):

(24) Os meninos, parecem t, que fizeram a tarefa
      the boys seem.3PL_ that did.3PL the homework

Ferreira (2009) derives both hyper-raising and the properties of null subjects in BP from incompleteness in the phi-features of Tense, which makes finite T behave like nonfinite T in that it “is unable to eliminate [i.e., check] the Case feature of the moved element” (Ferreira 2009: 29), forcing the subject to move further. For him, null subjects in BP are, in general, not null pronouns but rather traces of displaced subjects, as in hyper-raising.
The idea that referential null subjects in BP are not null pronouns but anaphors (i.e., A-bound empty categories), or variables (i.e., A-bar bound empty categories), goes back to Figueiredo Silva (1996), and was developed in different ways by Modesto (2004) and Rodrigues (2004). For the former, null subjects are not derived by movement but are base-generated as parts of a topic chain, a behavior that would be correlated with the fact that BP is a topic-oriented language; in particular, BP would have a special position for topics always projected in the CP layer. Rodrigues (2004) argues that 1st person null pronouns move to such a topic position and are then deleted, while 3rd person definite null pronouns, found only in embedded clauses, are traces of movement to the subject position.15

For all of the authors mentioned, the fact that BP null subjects behave differently from those of other Romance pro-drop languages is correlated with the weakening of the verbal morphology, which reflects some deficiency of T/Agr. However, instead of losing pro-drop, as French did, BP became a PNS language, perhaps because of widespread diglossia between the spoken vernacular and the EP-based language of the elite. In some analyses (for example in Modesto’s and Rodrigues’s), this development is explicitly correlated with the topic-oriented properties of the language. Going a step further, Negrão and Viotti (2000) argue that BP restrictions on the use of null subjects do not derive from weakening of the inflectional morphology, but as a consequence of the discourse-oriented properties of the language, which entail that “the recoverability of empty categories occurs via discourse prominence” (Negrão and Viotti 2000: 109).

It is clear that more than one parameter is at stake in the differences between BP and both CIP and EP. The facts that led Pontes to claim that BP was a topic-oriented language (cf. examples (14)-(15) above) do not derive straightforwardly from the deficiency of T/Agr, nor does the use of strong pronouns instead of clitics (cf. (16)) or the special position of the latter. Avelar and Galves (2011) derive the topic-oriented properties of BP by adopting Holmberg (2010)’s claim that in some languages (e.g., Icelandic) the EPP features of T are phi-independent, in the sense that the attraction of some DP to the specifier of T is independent of the agreement processes induced by phi-features. Relying on a recent version of the minimalist framework, the authors then propose that in BP the EPP features of Tense are satisfied before T is merged with C and inherits its features from C. Given Chomsky’s (2008) definition of A and A-bar positions, it follows from this analysis that Spec/T counts as
an A-bar position, which explains why extraction is possible from the subject position of tensed sentences in hyper-raising constructions: hyper-raising movement can then go through Spec/C, an undoubted A-bar position, to the subject position of the matrix clause, which is now also an A-bar position.

There is another question raised by sentences like (14)-(15): What is the source of case for the postverbal DP? Avelar and Galves (2011) answer that DPs in BP can be inserted into the derivation without a case feature. This possibility also accounts for the invariability of tonic pronouns in subject and object position (cf. (16)). Moreover, given the relationship between case and agreement in Chomsky (2008), the variability of subject-verb agreement can be explained in a similar way: Only when the DP enters the derivation with Case-features is agreement instantiated.

Finally, consider the innovative clitic placement in BP by which the clitic is affixed to the non-inflected form of the thematic verb, in contrast with EP where the clitic must raise to the inflected auxiliary. We can assume that lack of syntactic movement to Inflection is indeed due to the weakness of T/Agr. Given this, in accord with the morphological constraint that yields proclisis, clitics are moved by local dislocation to the left of V in the post-syntactic component of the grammar. From this point of view, they can be considered as allomorphs of the tonic pronouns, differing from them phonologically w.r.t the clitic feature, and additionally, if we follow Avelar and Galves (2011) w.r.t the case feature.

### IV. Parameters in the history of Portuguese: concluding remarks

The analyses we have discussed are summarized in Table 3, where the values in boldface indicate changes relative to the values in prior historical stages of the language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OP</th>
<th>CIP</th>
<th>EP</th>
<th>BP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple AgrS specifiers</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C attracts V</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phi-dependent EPP in T</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficient T/Agr</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligatory case feature on DP</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restriction against C1I</td>
<td>yes: prosodic</td>
<td>yes: prosodic</td>
<td>yes: Morpho-syntactic</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Evolving parameters in the history of Portuguese

From the above table and the discussion that it summarizes we can see that there has been large-scale surface variation throughout the history of the Portuguese E-language(s). Nonetheless, we find that the grammatical parameters needed to account for the changes we have tracked, not only the internal ones but also those associated with language contact in Brazil, are limited in number. It is even possible, though beyond the scope of this paper to investigate, that some of the parameters that distinguish BP from EP could be merged into a single one via the weakening of morphological marking. Perhaps more likely is the possibility that such weakening, arising out of language contact, affected several grammatical parameters simultaneously via language acquisition, by reducing the evidence for various syntactic properties which then revert to default values.

There is, of course, much uncertainty regarding the details both of Portuguese grammar and of linguistic theory, so that the results we have presented can only be considered tentative, though we think it unlikely that future discoveries will undermine our general parametric approach. In one domain, however, recent theoretical developments have had a large effect on the sort of analysis we think most promising: the domain of the evolution of clitic placement. Here we have followed several recent studies in claiming that the alternation between enclisis and proclisis is governed in part by the morphological component of the grammar, relying on operations defined by the theory of Distributed Morphology. If this approach is sound, it means that there are linguistic phenomena, in our case clitic placement, whose historical evolution undergoes a change in the grammatical module governing them. Since the morphological component of grammar is independent of the narrow syntax, allowing both modules to affect clitic placement implies the possibility of greater surface variability than a purely syntactic approach would lead one to expect. The actual history of Portuguese seems to require this extra flexibility and we hope to have shown that it allows us not only to describe the grammatical systems involved but also to account in an insightful way for the transitions between them.
References


1 Against Martins (1994) who argues that the language changes directly from OP to EP.
2 Other changes include the loss of features typical of Gallo-Romance syntax like ‘ende’, auxiliary shift, agreement with objects (see Mattos e Silva 1994). As far as we know, there is nothing about the diachronic evolution of these phenomena in the generative literature.
3 For Cardinaletti and Roberts, the movement of the verb is a last resort process that prevents the clitic from being in first position in the C domain. Their analysis, however, only accounts for enclisis with verbs in absolute first position and fails to explain the high frequency of enclisis with V2 in OP.
4 In order for her analysis to derive the right word order of interpolation, Martins adopts the Edge Principle proposed by Raposo, which requires that clitics always appear on the edge of the category to which they adjoin.
5 ‘Adopting Martins’ analysis of proclisis in main clauses forces us to assume that the TM Law is already operative in OP. Otherwise, we would expect proclisis to be possible in V1 sentences when the clitic raises to C as a head attached to the verb.
6 The question remains of deciding whether this functional category is part of the IP layer or the CP layer. We will assume the minimal hypothesis that there is no functional category above T in the IP layer.
Note that the frequency of enclisis in such cases varies widely from author to author (cf. Galves et al. 2005a).


Figure 1 is based on data drawn from 16 syntactically-parsed texts written by authors born from 1502 to 1836. The data were extracted from non-dependent clauses, and concern all the verbs except ser ‘to be’.

The authors argue that this change is an instance of grammaticalization.

It is important to note that agreement is variable in all social classes (cf. CHAPTER 31)

For generative analyses of this phenomenon, see Galves, 1998; Avelar and Galves, 2011, Munhoz and Naves 2012; Andrade and Galves 2014 among others.

In the terms of Holm (2004), BP is a ‘restructured language’.

The weakness of T/Agr can also explain the properties of verb-movement in BP, as argued by Galves 1993.

This analysis relies on a revision of the theory of thematic roles under which theta roles are features to be valued.

This exotic feature of BP could be due again to contact with African languages. For evidence in favor of the absence of case features in Bantu languages, see Diercks (2012).

This approach entails that T should bear phi-features when agreement is instantiated. Avelar and Galves (2011) do not address this question.