

VERB ORDER IN THE HISTORY OF BP: ISSUES FOR PERIODISATION¹

A ORDEM DO VERBO NA HISTÓRIA DO PB:
QUESTÕES PARA PERIODIZAÇÃO

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Abstract: The main goal of this paper is to present new elements for the periodisation of Brazilian Portuguese (BP). Under the field of diachronic syntax, from a generative perspective, we analyse verb order in morphologically annotated texts, which are part of the *Tycho Brahe-Brasil Corpus*, in order to offer new insights into the periodisation of Portuguese in Brazil. The texts cover a wide period, from the 17th century to the 21st century, and were written by individuals born in Brazil. We present evidence that written Portuguese in Brazil exhibits three major periods: Period I, whose grammar reflects properties of Classical Portuguese, referred to as “the language of the caravels” by Galves (2007); Period II, during which lexical verbs and auxiliaries lose movement, ceasing to move to the left periphery of the sentence but rising to a Tense position; and Period III, in which there is additional loss of movement in relation to lexical verbs but not to auxiliaries. These results appear to validate the hypothesis advocated by Ribeiro (1998) and Galves (2007) that the origins of BP precede the 19th century and help to reconsider the periodisation of the Portuguese language in Brazil.

Key-words: Brazilian Portuguese periodisation. Verb order. Verb movement.

Resumo: O objetivo principal deste artigo é apresentar novos elementos para a periodização do português brasileiro (PB). Situamo-nos no campo disciplinar da Sintaxe diacrônica, na perspectiva gerativista, e analisamos a ordem do verbo em textos – anotados

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morfológica e sintaticamente – que fazem parte do *Corpus Tycho Brahe-Brasil*, com fins de oferecer novos elementos sobre a periodização do português no Brasil. Escritos por indivíduos nascidos no Brasil, os textos dão conta de um grande período: desde o século 17 até o século 21. Apresentamos evidências de que o português escrito no Brasil apresenta três grandes períodos: o Período I, cuja gramática reflete propriedades do português clássico, considerada “a língua das caravelas”, por Galves (2007); Período II, cujos verbos lexicais e auxiliares perdem movimento, deixando de subir até a periferia esquerda da sentença, mas subindo até uma posição de tempo; e o Período III, em que há adicional perda de movimento em relação aos verbos lexicais, mas não aos auxiliares. Esses resultados parecem validar a hipótese defendida por Ribeiro (1998) e Galves (2007) de que as origens do PB são anteriores ao século XIX e auxiliam a repensar a periodização da língua portuguesa no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: Periodização do português brasileiro. Ordem do verbo. Movimento do verbo.

Introduction

When compared to European Portuguese (EP), Brazilian Portuguese (BP) exhibits significant differences, leading some scholars to consider them distinct languages (Kato, 2012). However, at what point in history did BP begin to diverge from EP? If we examine the periodisation of the Portuguese language in Brazil, various proposals have emerged over time.

One of the first researchers to address the complexity of the Brazilian linguistic issue was Serafim da Silva Neto (1986 [1950]), who outlined the history of the Portuguese language in the Americas based on the colony’s social history. He divided the history of Portuguese in Brazil into three phases: the first, from the beginning of colonisation (1532) to the expulsion of the Dutch (1654); the second, from 1654 to 1808, marked by the arrival of the Prince Regent and the Portuguese Court in Brazil; and the third phase, beginning in 1808, which saw the arrival of the Portuguese Court in Rio de Janeiro, profoundly transforming life in the colony.

Another periodisation proposal is that of Marlos de Barros Pessoa (2003). The primary distinction of this approach compared to the previous one is its attempt to integrate socio-historical milestones with stages of linguistic development. According to Pessoa (2003), between 1534 and 1750, multilingualism and the formation of rural linguistic varieties prevailed. This phase was followed by a stage of koineisation or pre-koineisation

of a common language (1750–1808), a period of urban variety formation (1808–1850), and a sub-period of stabilisation of urban varieties and the common language (1850–1922), which together correspond to the second phase of BP’s gestation. Subsequently, in the third phase of BP’s development, from 1922 onwards, there was a period of literary language elaboration.

Lobo (2003) also proposed a periodisation for the linguistic history of Brazil. Her approach is based on Brazilian demographic-linguistic history, population growth associated with urbanisation, and the process of schooling linked to linguistic standardisation. The selected criteria are thus sociolinguistic in nature. For Lobo (2003), the periodisation of Brazil’s linguistic history is divided into two broad phases: the first, characterised by widespread multilingualism, marked by the absence of urbanisation, schooling, and linguistic standardisation; and the second, in which localised multilingualism prevails, characterised by schooling, urbanisation, and linguistic standardisation.

Grounded in linguistic criteria, whilst still considering the socio-historical evolution of speakers, Volker Noll (2008) critiques the previously presented proposals, which he argues rely almost exclusively on historical events. He defines his periodisation as follows: from 1500 to 1550, an initial phase in which Portuguese is transferred to Brazil; from 1550 to 1700, a formative phase in which the first characteristics of Portuguese in Brazil emerge; from 1700 to 1800, a differentiating phase, during which BP takes shape and the divergence between European and Brazilian varieties begins to appear; from 1800 to 1950, a phase of written language and education development, marked by the introduction of the printing press, the establishment of public education, and the creation of higher education institutions, furthering the differentiation from the European norm; and, from 1950 onwards, a levelling phase, influenced by the rise of mass media, the introduction of television, and increasing urbanisation.

Finally, Dante Lucchesi (2017) proposes a periodisation of BP based on Brazil’s sociolinguistic history. His approach is rooted in both linguistic and social history, incorporating a broader range of languages that contributed to the formation of Brazilian society. The major innovation of this proposal is its temporal extension to a period prior to the arrival of the Portuguese in Brazil.

Thus, for Lucchesi (2017), the first phase of Brazil’s sociolinguistic history, termed Tupinisation of the Coast, begins after the year 1000, with the expansion of Tupi along the coastline, and ends in 1532 with the effective beginning of Portuguese colonisation in Brazil. The second phase, Generalised Multilingualism, spans from 1532 to 1695

and is characterised by low population density and linguistic plurality. The third phase, Linguistic Homogenisation, begins in 1695 with the discovery of gold in Minas Gerais and extends till the Revolution of 1930, and is subdivided into three stages: (1) from 1695 to 1808, marked by Brazil's first urbanisation surge during the gold cycle and the expansion of cattle farming; (2) from 1808 to 1850, when urbanisation intensified with the arrival of the Portuguese Court and Brazil's political independence; (3) from 1850 to 1930, characterised by the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade, massive European and Asian immigration, and the reinforcement of purist, Lusitanised linguistic norms. The fourth phase, Linguistic Levelling, from 1930 to the present, is marked by increasing industrialisation and urbanisation, as well as the dissemination of the educated urban norm, erasing contact-induced linguistic features in popular varieties. The different proposals for BP's periodisation are summarised below.

Periodisation Proposals for Brazilian Portuguese				
Serafim da Silva Neto (1986)				
1st phase 1532-1654	2nd phase 1654-1808		3rd phase 1808-present	
Marlos de Barros Pessoa (2003)				
1st phase 1534-1750	2nd phase 1750-1922		3rd phase 1922-present	
Tânia Lobo (2003)				
1st phase 1500-1850		2ª phase 1850-present		
Volker Noll (2008)				
1st phase 1500-1550	2nd phase 1550-1700	3rd phase 1700-1800	4th phase 1800-1950	5th phase 1950-present
Dante Lucchesi (2017)				
1st phase 1000-1532	2nd phase 1532-1695	3rd phase 1695-1930	4th phase 1930-present	

Despite the various periodisation proposals considering aspects of the external and/or internal history of the language which attempt to explain the differences between BP and EP, none explicitly address syntactic aspects – precisely where BP and EP diverge most significantly. Another noteworthy aspect is that none of these proposals pinpoint the moment when BP emerged.

Conversely, studies such as those by Tarallo (1993), Ribeiro (1998), Galves (2007), and Corôa (2022), whilst not proposing a periodisation, seek to determine the point at which BP emerged. These studies examine syntactic features that define BP grammar, such as the reorganisation of the pronominal system – leading to the loss of clitics and the restructuring of possessive pronouns –, the change in VS order in declarative and interrogative sentences, the weakening of agreement systems, and the loss of null subjects.

Tarallo (1993) identified three major processes of change in BP compared to EP: (i) the loss of pronominal reference, (ii) modifications in pronominalisation strategies, and (iii) the reorganisation of basic sentence patterns. Regarding (i), BP lost pronominal reference, leading to a reorganisation of both full and clitic pronouns. As a consequence of (i), BP also changed its relativisation strategies, with pied-piping relatives – superficially similar to those in the standard norm – resumptive pronoun relatives – where the gap is filled by a coreferential pronoun – and the so called chopping relatives – where both the governing preposition and the relativised constituent are absent. The third change process (iii) is also linked to the first two. According to Tarallo (1993), BP underwent a significant shift in its pronominalisation strategies, resulting, among other things, in a rigidification of the canonical word order pattern towards SVO. These changes, according to Tarallo (1993), occurred at the end of the 19th century.

Ribeiro (1998), Galves (2007), and Corôa (2022), however, propose a temporal shift further back, considering aspects of the grammar of the first Portuguese settlers in Brazil. Analysing clitic placement, Ribeiro (1998) argues that BP may have undergone a shift at the turn of the 18th to the 19th century, but many of the phenomena analysed as resulting from 19th-century changes in BP actually originated in the 16th century. Therefore, Ribeiro (1998) suggests that Brazilian Portuguese consists of at least two distinct grammars: one from the 16th to the 18th centuries and another from the 19th to the 20th centuries. Galves (2007) revisits Ribeiro's (1998) question and, based on a systematic study of clitic placement in the history of Portuguese, argues that BP evolved

from the grammar of Middle Portuguese – an intermediate grammatical stage between Old Portuguese and Modern Portuguese.

Additionally, Corôa (2022) examined the V2 effect and its correlated properties – clitic placement, null subjects, and null objects – in data from the 17th and 18th centuries. The findings indicate that the grammar of Brazilians born in the 17th century was still closely aligned with Classical Portuguese, with significant changes such as the loss of the V2 effect, the generalisation of proclisis, and the occurrence of referential null objects in 18th-century data, suggesting that BP grammar emerged in the 18th century.

Furthermore, Cardoso, Andrade, and Carneiro (2023), based on clitic placement data, raise the hypothesis that, between Classical Portuguese and the establishment of Modern Brazilian Portuguese in its prestigious variant, there existed a linguistic variety acquired by white Brazilians, which the authors term *Colonial Brazilian Portuguese*. Although this variety remained similar to Classical Portuguese, it exhibited enough divergences to suggest the early development of a distinct vernacular grammar in Brazil.

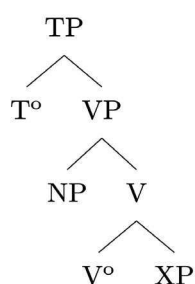
Building upon these studies, this paper seeks to address the following question: When did the Brazilian variety of Portuguese emerge? Based on intralinguistic syntactic evidence, a periodisation of BP is proposed. The phenomenon selected for analysis is verb placement throughout history, based on a dataset spanning from the 17th to the 21st centuries. According to Galves (2018), studying the evolution of verb position over time alongside the loss of the V2 effect in both BP and EP is crucial, as it can help elucidate the dynamics of change in these two systems. Therefore, verb order concerning the object – a feature of V2 grammar – is also considered, although the primary focus remains the positioning of the verb in relation to fixed adverbs. The hypothesis put forward aligns with those of Ribeiro (1998), Galves (2007), and Corôa (2022), advocating that the transition from the 17th to the 18th century marks the emergence of Brazilian Portuguese grammar.

To answer the question addressed in the present study, this paper is structured as follows. In Section 1, we discuss verb placement in relation to certain fixed elements within the sentence. Section 2 outlines the methodology employed to obtain the results. Section 3 presents the research findings, which serve as the basis for Section 4, where we propose a periodisation of Brazilian Portuguese based on verb placement patterns. Finally, Section 5 offers some concluding remarks.

1 Word order: the verb

Within the framework of Generative Grammar, in natural languages, a lexical verb universally concatenates with its arguments to form a Verbal Phrase (VP), as represented in (1). Despite this universal configuration, the position of the verb in relation to certain fixed elements within the sentence varies. Considering the examples in (2), it is possible to observe that verbs in Romance and Germanic languages behave differently. In English, the verb *sleep* appears to the right of the adverb *often*. In French, however, if the verb follows the adverb *souvent* ('frequently'), the sentence is ungrammatical, whereas when it precedes the adverb, the sentence is grammatical.

(1)



(2) a. English

John (*sleeps) often sleeps early.

b. French

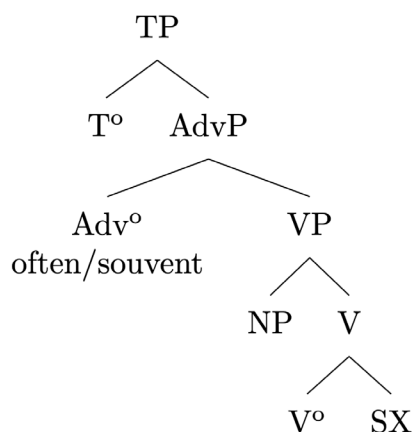
Jean dort souvent *dort tôt.

J. sleep.PRS.3SG often sleepPRS.3SG early

‘J. often sleeps early.’

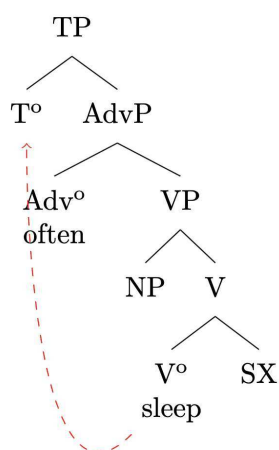
The contrast observed above, where the verb precedes the adverb in French but follows it in English – despite the verb having the same underlying structure in both languages – has been accounted for in Generative literature as a consequence of the presence or absence of a verb movement rule. Some scholars have proposed that elements such as adverbs and negation are structurally fixed within the sentence (cf. Edmonds, 1978; Pollock, 1989; Belletti, 1990; Cinque, 1999). As argued by Pollock (1989), adverbs such as *often* and *souvent* function as VP-adjuncts, meaning that they universally merge above VP, as illustrated in (3).

(3)

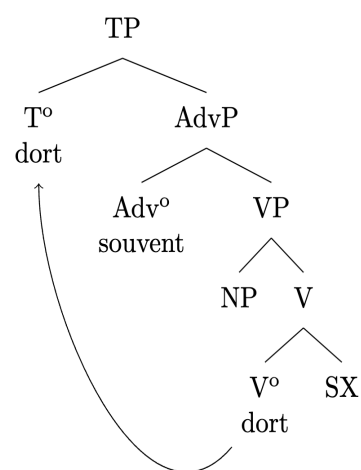


Consequently, the fact that the finite lexical verb in English obligatorily follows the adverb *often*, whilst in French the counterpart *souvent* precedes the verb, suggests that, in Germanic languages, the verb does not leave the VP through syntactic movement. Contrarily, in Romance languages, verb movement applies, yielding different word orders. Thus, the ADV_V order (*often_{ADV} sleeps_V*) in English can be explained by the absence of movement to the inflectional domain (marked by the dotted line in (4a)), whereas the French V_ADV order (*dort_V souvent_{ADV}*) results from the presence of verb movement, as illustrated in (4b).

(4) a. English



b. French



Building upon the proposal that certain elements in sentence structure are fixed, Cinque (1999) argues that there are approximately 40 adverbs that are rigidly ordered above VP, each semantically lexicalising the specifier of distinct functional projections.

Within this specialised framework – Syntactic Cartography, which systematically maps adverbs in syntactic structure – the hypothesis is that cross-linguistic variation in verb placement relative to adverbs results from differences in the landing site of verb movement.

- (5) The universal hierarchy of functional projections of TP (Adapted from Cinque, 1999, p. 106; Ledgeway & Lombardi, 2005, p. 81; Cinque, 2006)

ALTOS: [frankly Mood_{SpeechAct} > [luckily Mood_{Evaluative} > [allegedly Mood_{Evidential} > [probably Mod_{Epistemic} > [once T_{Past} > [then T_{Future} > [perhaps Mood_{Irrealis} > [necessarily Mod_{Necessity} > [possibly Mod_{Possibility} > [usually Asp_{Habitual} > [finally Asp_{Delayed} > [tendentially Asp_{Predispositional} > [again Asp_{Repetitive(I)} > [often Asp_{Frequentative(I)} > [willingly Mod_{Volition} > [quickly Asp_{Celerative(I)} >
 BAIXOS: [already T_{Anterior} > [no longer Asp_{Terminative} > [still Asp_{Continuative} > [always Asp_{Perfect} > [just Asp_{Retrospective} > [soon Asp_{Proximative} > [briefly Asp_{Durative} > [(?) Asp_{Generic/Progressive} > [almost Asp_{Prospective} > [suddenly Asp_{Inceptive} > [obligatorily Mod_{Obligation} > [in vain Asp_{Frustrative} > [(?) Asp_{Conative} > [completely Asp_{SgCompletive(I)} > [everything Asp_{PlCompletive} > [well Voice > [early Asp_{Celerative(II)} > [¿ Asp_{Inceptive(II)} > [again Asp_{Repetitive(II)} > [often Asp_{Frequentative(II)} > ... *ν*P

To pinpoint and compare the precise landing site of verbs across languages, the adverbial hierarchy has been methodologically divided into two domains (cf. Ledgeway & Lombardi, 2005, p. 81): adverbs in a higher position, lexicalising functional projections between Asp_{Celerative(I)} and Mood_{SpeechAct}, and adverbs in a lower position, closer to the site where the verb is merged, lexicalising projections between T_{Anterior} and Asp_{Frequentative(II)}.

Although the Cartographic approach has suggested an extensive array of functional projections within the architecture of grammar, this endeavour appears crucial for a more refined diagnosis of verb movement. As previously discussed, following Pollock (1989) and prior to the emergence of the cartographic model, it was generally assumed that the finite lexical verb in English remained within the VP, based on its placement relative to adverbs like *often* (cf. (2)). However, with the advent of the Cartographic model (Cinque, 1999), the English pattern has been more accurately understood. By adopting a more articulated hierarchy, such as the one proposed in (5), it becomes evident that the English verb, contrary to earlier assumptions, does undergo movement – albeit to a low syntactic

position (cf. Tescari Neto, 2012; Roberts, 2017), landing just above the functional projection of Voice, where the adverb *well* is lexicalised, as seen in (6). Thus, the hierarchy proposed by Cinque (1999), which we adopt in this study, appears to offer a more precise diagnostic for verb movement.

(6) John (**well*) sings **well**.

In order to discuss periodisation issues concerning BP through the lens of verb movement in its diachrony, we adopt the hierarchy in its Portuguese version as proposed by Tescari Neto (2019). This framework enables us to determine the position of the verb in BP history, based on its ordering in relation to fixed and hierarchically structured adverbs.

(7) The universal hierarchy of functional projections of TP – Brazilian Portuguese version (Tescari Neto 2019: 3567)

ALTOS: [francamente Mood_{SpeechAct} > [surpreendentemente Mood_{Mirative} > [felizmente Mood_{Evaluative} > [evidentemente Mood_{Evidential} > [provavelmente Mod_{Epistemic} > [uma vez T_{Past} > [então T_{Future} > [talvez Mood_{Irrealis} > [necessariamente Mod_{Necessity} > [possivelmente Mod_{Possibility} > [normalmente Asp_{Habitual} > [finalmente Asp_{Delayed} > [tendencialmente Asp_{Predispositional} > [novamente Asp_{Repetitive(I)} > [frequentemente Asp_{Frequentative(I)} > [de/com gosto Mod_{Volition} > [rapidamente Asp_{Celerative(I)} > BAIXOS: [já T_{Anterior} > [não...mais Asp_{Terminative} > [ainda Asp_{Continuative} > [sempre Asp_{Perfect} > [apenas Asp_{Retrospective} > [(dentro) em breve Asp_{Proximate} > [brevemente Asp_{Durative} > [(?) Asp_{Generic/Progressive} > [quase Asp_{Prospective} > [repentinamente Asp_{Inceptive} > [obrigatoriamente Mod_{Obligation} > [à toa Asp_{Frustrative} > [(?) Asp_{Conative} > [completamente Asp_{SgCompletive(I)} > [tudo Asp_{PlCompletive} > [bem Voice > [cedo Asp_{Celerative(II)} > [do nada Asp_{Inceptive(II)} > [de novo Asp_{Repetitive(II)} > [frequentemente Asp_{Frequentative(II)} > ...

As a working hypothesis, the aforementioned hierarchy provides an accurate diagnostic for identifying the landing site of verb movement. Despite being divided into high and low adverbs, it appears that, in BP, only low adverbs should be considered reliable indicators of verb raising. Tescari Neto (2019, p. 3573) notes that high adverbs, such as *provavelmente* ('probably'), in Spec,Mod_{Epistemic}, cannot follow the verb when they occur

in a sentence-final position (cf. (8a)), albeit they may do so in the presence of an object Noun Phrase (NP), as in (8b). Furthermore, assuming that VP ellipsis is licensed by verb movement (Matos & Cyrino, 2001), Tescari Neto (2019) also demonstrates that a high adverb is not recoverable through VP ellipsis, supporting the hypothesis that (8b) should not be derived *via* verb movement over *provavelmente*. This corroborates the claim that “high adverbs cannot be used as diagnostics for verb movement in BP” (Tescari Neto, 2019, p. 3574).

- (8) a. *João mente **provavelmente**.
 J. lie.PRS.3SG probably
 ‘J. probably lies.’
 b. João comia **provavelmente** arroz.
 J. eat.PRS.3SG probably rice
 ‘J. probably ate rice.’
- (9) João comia **provavelmente** arroz e a Maria também comia [-].
 J. eat.PST.3SG probably rice and the M. too eat.PST.3SG
 ‘J. probably are rice and M. also did [-].’
 a. [-]: comia arroz
 eat.PST.3SG rice
 b. [-]: ***provavelmente** arroz
 probably rice

To sharpen up the diagnostic of verb movement over time, it is necessary to discuss cases where a given word order does not necessarily provide conclusive evidence for the presence or absence of verb movement. As seen in (10), in BP, *ainda* (‘still’) may either precede or follow the finite verb. The placement of *ainda* before the verb can be explained by left-peripheral movement² (as suggested by Andriani, 2016, p. 240, for *ancora* in an Italian dialect), as illustrated in (10a), rather than by the absence of verb movement. Thus, regarding this adverb, solely the word order where the verb precedes *ainda*, as in (10b), should be taken as evidence of verb movement.

² This left-periphery displacement is supported by the precedence of the adverb over a quantifier subject in the low Foc position, such as *ninguém* ‘nobody’.

(i) No começo, *ainda ninguém* tinha tentado elaborar uma versão falada para essa questão dos novos pronomes (<https://www.extraclasse.org.br/geral/2021/10/a-gramatica-da-inclusao/>)

(ii) *Ainda ninguém* está passando mal por enquanto, mas fizeram isso na maldade, só pode ser e quero que alguém se pronuncie a respeito (https://www.reclameaqui.com.br/burger-king/que-bebida-e-essa_EpeVUiu6bxaZ4qCR/)

- (10) a. O Luciano **ainda** está se recuperando da cirurgia complexa...
theL. still be.PRS.3SGCLrecover.PROG of.the surgerycomplex
‘L. is still recovering from the complex surgery...’ (cf. also “O Luciano está **ainda** se recuperando...”³)
- b. O relator está **ainda** fazendo novos ajustes no texto...⁴
The rapporteur be.PRS.3SG still make.PROG new adjustments to.the text
‘The rapporteur is still making new adjustments to the text.’

The adverb *sempre* (‘always’) presents additional complications, as it has different interpretations (Tescari Neto, 2013; Araújo-Adriano, 2018): an assertive reading (11a), a temporal/aspectual reading (11b-c), and a behavioural pattern reading (11d). Each interpretation is activated depending on the functional projection where *sempre* is merged: Mood_{SpeechAct}, Asp_{Perfect} or Asp_{Frequentative(II)}, respectively. In this study, we control verb placement in relation to *sempre* in its temporal/aspectual reading, which is semantically associated with Asp_{Perfect}.

- (11) a. Lopes (1998, p. 7)
Sempre quero ver se tens coragem para isso!
really want.PRS.1SG see.INF if have.PRS.2SG courage to this
‘I do want to see if you are bold enough to do that’
- b. Dane-se, eu vou **sempre** estar lá. Ninguém me deu esse lugar. Eu
Screw-CL, I will always be.INF there. No one CL give.PST.3SG this place I
conquistei.
earn.PST.1SG
‘Screw it, I will always be there. No one gave me this place. I earned it.’
- c. **Sempre** dei o melhor de mim, **sempre** te tratei muito bem.
always give.PST.1SG the best of me always CL treat.PST.1SG very well
‘I always gave my best, always treated you very well.’
- d. Você vem **sempre** aqui?
you come.PRS.3SG often here?
‘Do you come here often?’

³ <https://oglobo.globo.com/cultura/noticia/2022/06/luciano-szafir-e-internado-com-obstrucao-intestinal-apos-retirada-de-bolsa-de-colostomia.ghtml>

⁴ http://www.espn.com.br/noticia/232257_relator-volta-a-alterar-texto-da-lei-geral-da-copa-para-incluir-idosos-na-cota-social

The adverb *bem* ('well') can only appear post-verbally, as in (12a). Its pre-verbal placement triggers a specific focus-related interpretation (12b). As noted by Tescari Neto and Forero Pataquiva (2020, p. 495, footnote 4), the pre-verbal position of *bem* involves, after the obligatory verb movement over *bem*, additional movement of the adverb to Spec,Foc and the raising of the subject to Spec,Top.

(12) A Maria (**bem*) fala ***bem*** inglês.

the M. well speak.PRS.3SG well English

'M. speaks English well.'

b. Tescari Neto e Forero Pataquiva (2020: 495, NR 4)

O João ***bem*** sabe o que deve fazer (não sabe mal!)

the J. well know.PRS.3SG the what must do.INF not know.PRS.3SG bad

'João sure knows what he must do (he doesn't know it poorly!).'

For the present study, we analyse verb placement in relation to a selection of low adverbs: *já* ('already'), *ainda* ('still'), *sempre* ('always'), *quase* ('almost'), and *bem* ('well'), which lexicalise, respectively, the projections of T_{Anterior} , $Asp_{\text{Continuative}}$, Asp_{Perfect} , $Asp_{\text{Prospective}}$ and Voice.

Another necessary enhancement in diagnosing verb movement must take into account evidence such as subject position and object fronting. With this in mind, we consider object fronting, given that Portuguese, in its earlier stages, exhibited a flexible V2 grammar, as reported in the literature (Ribeiro, 1995; Torres Morais, 1995; Paixão de Sousa, 2004; Gibrail, 2010; Antonelli, 2011; Galves & Paixão de Sousa, 2017; Galves & Gibrail, 2018; Galves, 2020). Thus, adverb movement alone would not sufficiently characterise the syntactic processes occurring in these systems.

V2 languages exhibit two main properties: verb movement to the C head and the movement of only one constituent to Spec,CP (Haegeman, 1996; Holmberg, 2015). Whilst Vikner (1995) was the first to show that in V2 systems the verb moves to the CP layer, the left periphery of the sentence, Rizzi (1997) provided extensive evidence that CP contains additional internal structures, splitting CP into a series of distinct functional projections (13):

(13) ForceP > TopP* > FocP > TopP* > FinP

TopP hosts topics, typically encoding given information that is in some way salient and available in the discourse. This position appears twice in the hierarchy, albeit it may theoretically occur an indefinite number of times. FocP accommodates focus, marking new information, and, in some languages, it is restricted to contrastive focus. FinP is a projection reflecting finiteness, given that many languages exhibit distinctions between finite and non-finite complementisers (Rizzi, 1997).

Considering the split-CP hypothesis and the hierarchies proposed by Rizzi (1997), some scholars (Roberts, 2004; Holmberg, 2015) argue that the V2 effect is linked to the feature of $[+/- \text{FINITE}]$, as in these languages, FinP hosts the ϕ -probe and the edge feature responsible for V2.

Building on Benincà (1995), Wolfe (2018, 2019) expands this proposal, according to which all V2 systems involve verb movement to Fin; however, in a subclass of V2 languages, the Force projection exhibits the same properties as Fin. Prior to Wolfe, Pinto (2011) had already proposed an articulation between Force and Finiteness to account for variation of the V2 effect⁵.

For Wolfe (2018, 2019), V2 languages can be categorised according to whether the landing site of the verb is ForceP or FinP. This results in the following typology of V2 languages based on landing sites:

(14) Typology of V2 languages (Wolfe, 2018)

- a. V-to-Fin (languages with a less strict/more flexible V2 system)
- b. V-to-Force (languages with a strict V2 system)

The intuition behind this proposal is that “the head bearing the features responsible for the V2 property is low in the functional structure, and thus permits lexicalisation of an array of functional projections structurally higher than the moved verb” (Wolfe, 2016, p. 296). Thus, $V > 2$ orders are possible if the leftmost elements are generated *in situ*. In FinV2 systems, since nothing *a priori* excludes a successive set of projections hosting constituents simultaneously, the result of these operations would be a “flexible” V2 system in which both V1 and $V > 2$ orders can occur alongside verb-second placement.

ForceV2 languages would exhibit an edge feature requiring verb movement from Fin to Force and the movement of an already fronted XP to Spec,ForceP. In these ForceV2 languages, $V > 2$ orders are possible, though less common. This is so because the field above

⁵ The structure proposed by Pinto (2011) differs from that of Wolfe (2015) regarding the positioning of the Frame head.

Force is associated with semantic-pragmatic features encoding the speaker's attitude.

Since verb movement constitutes only half of the V2 effect, whilst the other half involves the fronting of a constituent – regardless of its category or syntactic function – to the pre-verbal position, we consider the specificity of object fronting (Lightfoot, 1995; Holmberg, 2015). This serves as evidence for V2, as such constructions exhibit a highly specific OVS structural configuration whilst simultaneously functioning as a reliable diagnostic for verb movement. In the following section, we present the methodology employed to conduct the present study.

2 Methodology (data collection, searches and corpus)

The data for this research were extracted from 11 theater texts and 1 ballad – morphologically annotated – and from 346 Letters and 1330 Minutes of the Salvador City Council – morphologically and syntactically annotated, originating from the *Tycho Brahe-Brazil Corpus* (cf. Araújo-Adriano; Corôa, 2022).

Table 1 – Information on the texts of the analysed corpus

Birth	Author	Tycho Brahe Code	Publication of the texts ⁶	Genre
1602	Rui de Carvalho Pinheiro	va_013	1650-1684	Letter
1630	Domingos Garcia de Aragão	va_014	1653	Letter
1650	Pedro Dias Pereira	va_017	1699-1710	Letter
1670	João de Couros Carneiro Filho	va_016	1699-1710	Letter
1670	Manuel Silveira de Magalhães	va_018	1710-1730	Letter
1672	Manuel Pessoa de Vasconcelos	va_017	1699-1710	Letter
1672	Manuel Pessoa de Vasconcelos	va_018	1710-1730	Letter
1700	João de Couros Carneiro Neto	va_018	1728-1730	Letter
1705	Antônio José da Silva	s_007	1737	Comedy
1710	Jerônimo Sodré Pereira	va_019	1751-1765	Minutes
1720	Joaquim Rodrigues da Silveira	va_019	1751-1765	Minutes
1720	Manuel José de Azevedo	va_020	1765-1775	Minutes
1721	José Álvaro Pereira Sodré	va_020	1765-1775	Minutes
1725	João Duarte Silva	va_020	1765-1775	Minutes
1740	Domingos Caldas Barbosa	b_011	1798	Ballad
1815	Martins Pena	p_003	1833	Comedy
1815	Martins Pena	p_004	1845	Comedy

⁶ Although we use the title “publication of the texts”, in the case of the minutes and letters of the Salvador City Council, we consider the period of production of the documents.

1829	José de Alencar	a_008	1857	Comedy
1838	França Junior	j_001	1883	Comedy
1855	Artur de Azevedo	a_009	1891	Comedy
1880	Gastão Tojeiro	t_001	1920	Comedy
1934	Gianfrancisco Guarnieri	g_011	1957	Comedy
1956	Miguel Falabella	f_003	1990	Comedy
1978	Paulo Gustavo	g_012	2006	Comedy
1966	Paulo Sacaldassy	s_006	2007	Comedy

The minutes and letters of the Salvador City Council (308,649 words) were written by 18 clerks throughout the 17th century and the first half of the 18th century. The plays were published between the 18th and 21st centuries, and the ballad in the 18th century (233,183 words). The total number of words analysed was 541,832. These texts are all available and freely accessible on the *Corpus website* (<https://www.tycho.iel.unicamp.br/corpus/catalogo.html>). Below, we present Table 2, with information by century, considering the distribution of the genres.

Table 2 – Distribution of the *corpus* by century and genre

Century	Genre	Number of words
17	Letters	90,676
18	Letters	108,607
18	Minutes	109,366
18	Theatrical comedy	27,224
18	Song	18,445
19	Theatrical comedy	86,842
20	Theatrical comedy	67,597
21	Theatrical comedy	41,623

As mentioned in the introduction, the phenomenon chosen for our analysis is verb order and object fronting between the 17th and 21st centuries. Considering that verb positioning in relation to adverbs is a reliable diagnostic for verb movement (cf. section 1), occurrences of sentences were computed in which the lexical verb and the auxiliary verb preceded or followed, immediately or not, certain adverbs diagnostic for verb movement, more specifically the low adverbs *já* ('already'), *ainda* ('still'), *sempre* ('always'), *quase* ('almost'), and *bem* ('well'). This is because adverbial expressions such as *hoje em dia* ('nowadays'), *todos os dias* ('every day'), and *nunca* ('never') do not provide very clear evidence

of where they are positioned in the hierarchy we assume here and, consequently, do not provide clear evidence with regard to verb movement in the history of Portuguese.

Thus, based on the order, the precedence of a verb in relation to the adverb – for example, *quase*, in Spec,Asp_{Prospective} – would be equivalent to saying that, from its base position, that is, within *vP*, the verb moved (at least) to the following functional projection (for example, Asp_{Generic/Progressive}), so as to generate the order *V_ quase*. Conversely, if the verb is found to the right of the adverb, generating the order *quase _V*, by hypothesis, we are led to evidence a lower instance of the verb's movement.

Regarding the searches in the *corpus*, for the cases of adverb verb precedence, template *V_ADV*, we searched for the tag *VB-X*, where *VB* is equivalent to a lexical verb and *X* is any inflection, such as *D* and *P* – tags for past perfect and present, respectively (e.g., *comeu/comia* ‘ate’ = *VB-D*; *come* ‘eats’ = *VB-P*). For the template in question, this verb precedes – not necessarily an immediate precedence, hence the tag *Precedes* – a specific *ADV* – hence the tag *iDoms* –, for *bem* (‘well’), for example.

- (15) a. Search algorithm provided to locate *V_ADV*
 ((*VB-D|VB-I|VB-P|VB-R|VB-RA|VB-SD|VB-SP|VB-SR|VB-F|Precedes ADV|ADV-**)
 AND (*ADV|ADV-** *iDoms bem|já|ainda|sempre|quase*))
 b. Search algorithm provided to locate *ADV_V*
 ((*ADV|ADV-** *Precedes VB-D|VB-I|VB-P|VB-R|VB-RA|VB-SD|VB-SP|VB-SR|VB-F*)
 AND (*ADV|ADV-** *iDoms bem|já|ainda|sempre|quase*))

For auxiliary verbs, we searched for the tags *ET-X|SR-X|HV-X|TR-X*, where *ET* is equivalent to the verb *estar* (‘to be’), *SR* is equivalent to the verb *ser* (‘to be’), *HV* to *haver* (‘to have’), and *TR* to *ter* (‘to have’), with *X* representing any inflection, such as *P* and *D* (e.g., *está* ‘is’ = *ET-P*; *tinha* ‘had’ = *TR-D*). In the *ADV_AUX* template, an *ADV* precedes – though not necessarily immediately, hence the *Precedes* tag – an auxiliary verb. The search for these tags retrieves any occurrences of *estar*, *ser*, *haver*, and *ter*, not necessarily in their auxiliary usage; for instance, in *João tinha muito dinheiro* (‘João had a lot of money’), *tinha* is identified by the search as *TR-D*. Therefore, a manual filtering process was required to isolate only instances in which these verbs function as auxiliaries, which is confirmed when they precede a non-finite verb (gerund, participle, or infinitive⁷).

⁷ For auxiliary criteria, cf. Lunguinho (2011), Araújo-Adriano (2018).

- (16) a. Search algorithm provided to locate AUX_ADV
 ((ET-D|ET-I|ET-P|ET-R|ET-RA|ET-SD|ET-SP|ET-SR|ET-F|SR-D|SR-I|SR-P|SR-R|SR-RA|SR-SD|SR-SP|SR-SR|SR-F|HV-D|HV-I|HV-P|HV-R|HV-RA|HV-SD|HV-SP|HV-SR|HV-F|TR-D|TR-I|TR-P|TR-R|TR-RA|TR-SD|TR-SP|TR-SR|TR-F
 Precedes ADV|ADV-*) AND (ADV|ADV-* iDoms bem|já|ainda|sempre|quase))
 b. Search algorithm provided to locate ADV_AUX
 ((ADV|ADV-* Precedes ET-D|ET-I|ET-P|ET-R|ET-RA|ET-SD|ET-SP|ET-SR|ET-F|SR-D|SR-I|SR-P|SR-R|SR-RA|SR-SD|SR-SP|SR-SR|SR-F|HV-D|HV-I|HV-P|HV-R|HV-RA|HV-SD|HV-SP|HV-SR|HV-F|TR-D|TR-I|TR-P|TR-R|TR-RA|TR-SD|TR-SP|TR-SR|TR-F)AND (ADV|ADV-* iDoms bem|já|ainda|sempre|quase))

As highlighted in the previous section, if we assume that Portuguese has a flexible V2 grammar, we must consider other evidence besides the positioning of the verb. The question of where the verb landed, that is, knowing whether the verb moved to a certain position, can be measured, among other things, from the position of the adverbs and the object fronting that, consequently, lead to the inversion of the subject and the raising of the verb. In this article, we will also consider object fronting as evidence of a V2 system and, consequently, of the loss of this system. In the next section, we will present these results. The examples reported in the results section will include the text code in the *Tycho Brahe Platform*.

3 Results

In this section, we present the results regarding the position of the verb in relation to those adverbs and object fronting that can shed light on verb movement in the history of Brazilian Portuguese. In general, we found few instances in which the adverb modifies the verb, as well as few cases of object fronting. Some of these were useful for diagnosing verb movement, while others were not. To distinguish lexical verbs from auxiliary verbs, we use *V* for the former and *AUX* for the latter. The data are grouped as follows: the 17th century; the 18th and 19th centuries; and the 20th and 21st centuries, following the hypothesis proposed.

3.1 The 17th century

Examining the position of the verb in relation to the adverb *já* ('already'), we observed that, in most cases, this adverb followed the verbal element, regardless of whether it was a lexical or an auxiliary verb. In the case of lexical verbs, 82% of occurrences followed the *V_já* pattern (17a), whereas only 18% followed the *já_V* pattern (17b). For auxiliary verbs, postposing the adverb was a categorical position (17c). Below, we present some examples⁸.

⁸ Following a reviewer's recommendation, we have reduced the number of examples.

(17) Adverb *já*

- a. e mais quando corre **já** por nossa conta o sal(va_017).
 and more when run.PRS.3SG already for our account the salt
 ‘and more when the salt is already running on us.’
- b. O alívio que temos em ser governados por VM
 the relief who have.PRS.1PL in be.INF govern.PTC by VM
 cujas honras grandezas **já** gozamos(va_013).
 whose honours great already enjoy.PRS.1PL
 ‘The relief we have in being governed by VM whose great honours we already enjoy.’
- c. e por isso se tem movido **já** muitas
 and therefore CL have.PRS.3SG move.PTC already many
 demandas(va_016)⁹.
 lawsuits
 ‘and therefore many lawsuits have already been.’

Regarding the adverb *ainda* (‘still’), we also observed a preference for a position after the verb. Despite the fact that the precedence of *ainda*, found in the data, cannot be taken as evidence of the absence of movement of the verbal item, considering that *ainda* can move to the left periphery of the sentence (cf. section 1), the verbal item preceding the adverb is evidence of verbal movement. This is what we observed with the lexical verbs preceding the adverb *ainda* in 82% of the occurrences (18a). In the case of auxiliary verbs, the postposition of the adverb was found in 60% of the occurrences (18b).

(18) Adverb *ainda*

- a. e exerce **ainda** com toda a verdade(va_016).
 and exercise.PRS.3SG still with all the truth
 ‘he still exercises with all truth’
- b. Esta disposição se foi observando **ainda** ao depois(va_017).
 this provision CL be.PST.3SG observe.PROG still to the after
 ‘This provision was still observed after’

Observing the position of the verb in relation to the adverb *sempre* (‘always’), we were able to see that most of the data with that adverb followed the verbal item, regardless of the type of verb, whether lexical or auxiliary. In the first case, 68% of the occurrences were with V_ *sempre* (19a) and only 32% with *sempre* _V (19b). In the case of auxiliary

⁹ The fact that not only the auxiliary verb but also its non-finite verbal complement precedes the adverb is *already* evidence that these two verbs moved together to a higher position in the sentence. In this regard, cf. Araújo-Adriano and Cyrino (2022, forthcoming).

verbs, the postposition of the adverb was also a preferred position, with 80% of the cases (19c), against 20% of the ordering *sempre* _AUX (19d). Below, we provide some examples.

(19) Adverb *sempre*

- a. Ficaremos **sempre** reconhecidos (va_017).
 stay.PRS.1PL always grateful
 ‘We will always be grateful’
- b. E **sempre** se praticou (va_016).
 and always CL practice.PST.3SG
 ‘and it has always been practiced’
- c. E foram **sempre** aprovadas pelos sindicantes (va_013).
 and be.PST.3PL always approved for union members
 ‘they were always approved by the union members’
- d. e com este privilégio **sempre** se há de
 and with this privilege always CL have.PRS.3SG of
 contender (va_016)¹⁰
 contend.INF
 ‘and with this privilege one will always contend’

Regarding *quase* (‘almost’), we observed that the positioning of the adverb before the auxiliary verb was categorical – we did not find data with this adverb and lexical verbs. Below, we present some of the few examples we found.

(20) Adverb *quase*

- [...] a Fortaleza de Santo Antonio do Carmo que havia
 [...]the Fortress of S. A. of.the C. who have.PST.3SG
 principiado seu antecessor está **quase** posta em sua
 start.PST.3SG your predecessor be.PRS.3SG almost placed in your
 última perfeição, (va_16).
 final perfection
 ‘the Fortress of Santo Antonio do Carmo, which had been started by its predecessor, is almost placed in its final perfection’

¹⁰ We treat the verb *haver* in *haver de* as an auxiliary, as demonstrated by Araújo-Adriano (2019, p. 75-86).

Regarding the adverb *bem* ('well'), we found lexical and auxiliary verbs both preceding and following it. All the cases of precedence were cases in which *bem* conveyed a focus reading and were therefore not evidence for the absence of verb movement (cf. also section 1). In this type of sentence, the adverb conveys an aspectual reading. According to Martins (1994), monosyllabic adverbs, when in a pre-verbal position, lose their original denotation, which he calls the "semantic emptying" of these elements.

On the other hand, we found evidence of lexical verbs preceding *bem*, which leads us to affirm that there was verbal movement over this adverb. Although we did not find any occurrence of *bem* following or preceding auxiliary verbs, the fact that the auxiliary verb precedes higher adverbs than *bem*, for example, *já* (17), *ainda* (18), *sempre* (19) and *quase* (20), by transitivity (Cinque, 1999, p. 33), it can be said that the functional verb also moved over *bem*.

(21) Adverb *bem*

De	que	até	aqui	temos	dito	se	mostra	bem	que
From	that	to	here	have.PRS.1PL	say.PTC	CL	show.PRS.3SG	well	that
uma	das		grandes	obrigações	é		conservar-nos	tantos	anos
one	of	the	great	obligations	be.PRS.3SG		keep.INF=CL	many	years
o	dito		Governador	(va_017).					
the	said		Governor						

'From what we have said so far it is clear that one of the great obligations is to keep the said Governor for so many years.'

3.1.1 Evidence of a V2 System

In V2 languages, object fronting is an option that changes the position in which the subject occurs; this does not happen in non-V2 languages. When the object is moved to the pre-verbal position in V2 languages, the order generated is OVS (Antonelli, 2001).

In the 17th century data, we found the following cases of direct object fronting (in italics, we indicate the phrase that performs the function of subject; and we underlined the object function):

- (22) a. Algumas quantias que achamos **receberam** os ditos
 Some amounts that think.PST.1PL receive.PST.3PL the so-called
tesoureiros (va_017).
 treasurers
 'The so-called treasurers received some amounts we think'

b. Esta mercê e singular esmola que esperamos
 this mercy and singular alms that hope.PRS.1PL
 nos **conceda** *a grandeza, e justiça de VM* (va_015).
 CL grant.PRS.SBJ.3SG the greatness, and justice of VM
 ‘This mercy and singular alms that we hope will be granted to us by the greatness and justice of Your Majesty’

In our data, in sentences with object fronting and an expressed subject, categorically, the subject occurs in the post-verbal position.

As it is a marked option, the OVS order is quite rare. In the *corpus* analysed, there are only 43 occurrences of this order in the 17th century, out of a total of 1551 cases of V2 sentences, which adds up to about 2.7% of the sentences.

3.1.2 Summary of 17th century data

To conclude the presentation of the 17th century data, in Table 3, we summarize the occurrences of lexical and auxiliary verbs in relation to the adverbs.

Table 3 – Percentage of lexical and auxiliary verbs in relation to adverbs in the 17th century

	<i>já</i>	<i>ainda</i>	<i>sempre</i>	<i>quase</i>	<i>bem</i>
adv_V	18%	18%	32%		
V_adv	82%	82%	68%		100%
adv_AUX		40%	20%		
AUX_adv	100%	60%	80%	100%	

Based on the percentages presented, we can observe that the lexical verbs moved through *já*, *ainda*, *sempre* and *bem*. Still, the auxiliary verbs moved through *já*, *ainda*, *sempre*, *quase* and, by transitivity, *bem*.

3.2 18th and 19th centuries

Regarding the positioning of *já* in the 18th and 19th centuries, we observe a preference for its precedence over lexical verbs, occurring in 86% of the occurrences in the 18th century (23b). It is noteworthy that the 14% of V_*já* (23a) can be treated as remnants of a V2 grammar, still present in the 18th century, but absent in the 19th century, considering the 100% (23c) of occurrences of lexical verbs following *já*.

(23) Adverb *já*

- a. Quase dentro da mesma cidade tem Dona
 Almost within by same city have.PRS.3SG D.
 Izabel Maria Guedes de Britto uma rocinha
 I. M. G. of B. a farm
 que poderá ter em todo o seu circuito
 that can.FUT.3SG have.INF in all the this circuit
 quatrocentas braças de terra as quais possuía **já**
 four hundred fathoms of land the which have.PST.3SG already
 medidas e demarcadas (va_020).
 measure.PTC and demarc.PTC

‘Almost within the same city, Dona Izabel Maria Guedes de Britto has a small farm that may have four hundred fathoms of land in its entire circuit, which had already been measured and demarcated’

- b. Cala-te Sancho, cala-te, que **já** lá vai (s_004)
 Shut.IMP=CL S., shut.IMP=CL that already there go.PRS.3SG
 ‘Shut up Sancho, shut up, it’s already gone’

- c. Nós **já** sabemos como foi o engano (p_004)
 We already know.PRS.1PL how be.PST.3SG the mistake
 ‘We already know how the mistake was made.’

- d. Só por eu cumprimentar o moço **já** o estava
 just by I great.INF the boy already CL be.PST.3SG
 namorando. (b_011)
 date.PROG
 ‘Just by greeting the guy I was already dating him.’

- e. Não poder deferirmos por estar o negócio
 Not can.INF defer.INF.1PL by be.INF the matter
 pendente como este esteja **já** decidido (va_019).
 pending as this be.PRS.SBJ.3SG already decide.PTC
 ‘We cannot defer because the matter is pending as it has **already been** decided’

- f. **Já** está deitando o chapéu. (a_008).
 Already be.PRS.3SG put-down.PROG the hat
 ‘He is already putting his hat down’

Unlike lexical verbs, which in the 18th century showed a preference for following the adverb *já*, there was still a certain preference in the 18th century for auxiliary verbs to precede *já*. This occurred in the *corpus* in 73% of cases (23e). It was in the 19th century that the precedence of *já* over auxiliary verbs also became categorical, occurring in 100% of the data in the second century (23f).

The data from the 18th century can be taken as evidence that there was a process of competition between grammars in that period, with remnants of a classical grammar that was declining and a new grammar that was emerging, since, in BP, finite verbs consistently appear to the right of the adverb *já* (Modesto, 2001) and a sentence in which the order *já* _ V occurs is only possible in BP with a focus reading, unlike what can be seen in classical Portuguese.

Further evidence that there are remnants of a V2 grammar in the 18th century is the occurrence of object fronting in the order O _ V _ S (24) (in 0.19% of the sentences analysed). In the 19th century, we did not find data on object fronting.

(24) a. E o mesmo **disse** *Mateus Pereira dos Santos Cavalcante* (va_019).

and the same say.PST.3SG M. P. of-the S. C.

‘And the same was said by Mateus Pereira dos Santos Cavalcante.’

b. E este termo **registara** *o escrivão da nova contribuição*

and this term register.PTP.3SG the clerk of-the newcontribution

voluntária nos seus livros (va_020)

voluntary in-theyour books

‘And this term was recorded by the clerk of the new voluntary contribution in his books’

In the diachronic research, we found *ainda* following the lexical verb both in the 18th century (25a), in 13% of the cases, and in the 19th century (25b), in 19% of the data, which suggests that the lexical verb moved to a position above the functional projection lexicalized by this adverb. Although we found postposition of auxiliary and lexical verbs in relation to *ainda*, showing us nothing in relation to the verb movement, both in the 18th century (25a) and in the 19th (25c) we have evidence of auxiliary verbs preceding this adverb, which constitutes evidence of movement of the auxiliaries over *ainda*.

(25) **Adverb *ainda***

a. O requerimento sobre se mandar bater moeda provincial se não
the request about if send.INF mint.INF currency provincial if not
tem **ainda** proposto no conselho por razão de se
have.PRS.3SG still propose.PTC in-the council by reason of CL
ter ocupado com Rio e Minas. (va_019)
have.INF busy with R. and M.

‘The request regarding the minting of provincial currency has not yet been submitted to the council due to its engagement with Rio and Minas.’

b. Não observei **ainda!** (a_008)

not observe.PST.3SG yet

‘I haven’t observed it yet.’

c. Tenho **ainda** que ir arranjar mandado de despejo contra

have.PRS.1SG still that go.INF obtain.INF order of eviction against

uma viúva, minha inquilina, que há três não me paga o

a widow my tenant that have.PST.3SG three not CL pay.PRS.3SG the

aluguel da casa. (a_009)

rent of-the house

‘I still have to obtain an eviction order against a widow, my tenant, who has not paid the house rent for three months.’

Regarding the adverb *sempre*, there was a certain change in the behaviour of verbs throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. During the 18th century, lexical verbs did not show a high tendency to precede the adverb, preceding it in 35% (26a), with this position being highly preferable in the 19th century (26c), appearing in 82% of the data. Regarding auxiliary verbs, in the 18th century¹¹, the postposition of the adverb to the auxiliary occurred in all appearances of the adverb *sempre* (26d), as well as in the 19th century (26e).

(26) **Adverb *sempre***

a. E que aos mesmos criadores se lhe dariam **sempre** que entrassem

and that to-the same creators CL CL give.PST.3PL always that enter.PST.SBJ.3PL

com os seus gados. (va_018)

with the their cattle

‘And that the same breeders would be given [them] whenever they brought in their cattle.’

¹¹ In both the 18th and 19th centuries, there were cases in which the adverb *always* preceded the auxiliary verb. These were cases of *always* conveying a confirmatory reading, which were not computed (cf. Lopes, 1998; Tescari Neto, 2013; Araújo-Adriano, 2022).

- b. **Sempre** se dará ao Senhor de Engenho, e Lavradores destes
 always CL give.FUT.3SG to-the sir of mill and farmer of-this
 livremente todo o gado (va_019)
 freely whole the cattle
 ‘All the cattle will always be freely given to the Lord of the Sugar Mill and the Farmers.’
- c. O senhor nunca nos incomoda, dá-nos **sempre** muito prazer. (j_001)
 the sir never CL bother.PRS.3SG give.PRS.3SG=CL always great pleasure
 ‘The gentleman never bothers us; he always brings us great pleasure.’
- d. Pois seguro-te, meu bem, que apesar de tudo hei
 because assure.PRS.1SG=CL my dear that despite of everything have.PRS.1SG
 de ser **sempre** firme, constante, e leal. (s_007)
 of be.INF always firm constant and loyal
 ‘Well, I assure you, my dear, that despite everything, I shall always remain firm, constant, and loyal.’
- e. Se eu soubesse que havia de ser **sempre** tão feliz... (p_004)
 If I know.PST.SBJ.1SG that have.PST.3SG of be.INF always so happy
 ‘If I knew I would always be this happy, I would marry fifty times.’

We did not find occurrences of *quase* with lexical verbs in the data, only with auxiliaries. Its positioning in relation to the adverb was categorical: anteposition, both in the 18th and 19th centuries, as seen in ((27a) and (27b)), below. Although we have no evidence of *quase* with lexical verbs, in that period, the lexical verb preceded adverbs higher than *quase*, such as *sempre* (26), *ainda* (25), which, by transitivity, suggests that it also preceded *quase*.

(27) Adverb *quase*

- a. ... e está **quase** indo-se por um fio. (s_007)
 and be.PRS.3SG almost go.PROG=CL by one thread
 ‘and is almost hanging by a thread.’
- b. Os recursos que eu possuía estão **quase** inteiramente
 the resources that I possess.PST.3SG be.PRS.3PL almost entirely
 esgotados. (a_009)
 exhausted
 ‘The resources I possessed are almost entirely exhausted.’

As for the positioning of the verb in relation to the adverb *bem*, both postposition and anteposition were attested. Just as in the 17th century, the antepositions to the verb were cases of *bem* with a focus reading. On the other hand, we found evidence of lexical verbs preceding *bem*, which leads us to affirm that there was verbal movement over this adverb in the 18th (28a) and 19th (28b) centuries.

(28) Adverb *bem*

- a. Dizem **bem**, que o mundo não é capaz de... (s_004)
 say.PRS.3PL well that the world not be.PRS.3SG capable of
 ‘They say rightly that the world is not capable of’
- b. VE passa **bem**. (j_001)
 H.E. spend.PRS.3SG well
 ‘Your Excellency is well.’

Although no occurrence of *bem* following or preceding auxiliary verbs has been attested, its precedence in relation to adverbs higher than *bem*, such as *sempre* (26), *ainda* (25), due to transitivity, allows us to affirm that, hypothetically, the functional verb also moved over *bem* in both the 18th and 19th centuries.

3.2.1 Summary of 18th and 19th centuries data

To conclude the presentation of the data from the 18th and 19th centuries, in Tables 4 and 5, we summarize the occurrences of the lexical and auxiliary verbs in relation to the adverbs. We can observe that lexical verbs move over the adverbs *bem*, *sempre*, *ainda* and, by extension, *quase*, an adverb lower than the last two, but does not move over *já*. On the other hand, auxiliary verbs only move over adverbs higher than *bem*, such as *quase*, *sempre*, *ainda* and *já*, in the 18th century, but no longer in the 19th century.

Table 4 – Percentage of lexical and auxiliary verbs in relation to adverbs in the 18th century

	<i>já</i>	<i>ainda</i>	<i>sempre</i>	<i>quase</i>	<i>bem</i>
adv_V	86%	87%	65%		
V_adv	14%	13%	35%		100%
adv_AUX	27%	50%			
AUX_adv	73%	50%	100%	100%	

Table 5 – Percentage of lexical and auxiliary verbs in relation to adverbs in the 19th century

	<i>já</i>	<i>ainda</i>	<i>sempre</i>	<i>quase</i>	<i>bem</i>
adv_V	100%	81%	18%		
V_adv		19%	82%		100%
adv_AUX	100%				
AUX_adv		100%	100%	100%	

3.3 20th and 21st Centuries

In the *corpus*, we found only one occurrence of *já* following a lexical verb, as seen in (29a). This use, however, is not prototypical of the adverb in question. Here, *já* seems to convey an idea of *soon*, *in a while*. In all other uses of the adverb, in its characteristic reading of preceding the event, the lexical and auxiliary verb preceded it in the 20th and 21st centuries (29b and 29c).

(29) **Adverb *já***

- a. A Marcelina ainda não foi, mas vai **já**. (t_001)
the M. yet not go.PST.3SG but goPRS.3SG right away
‘Marcelina hasn’t gone yet, but she’s going right away.’
- b. Todo mundo **já** conhece essa história, Selma ... (f_003)
everybody already know.PRS.3SG this story Selma
‘Everybody already know this story, Selma.’
- c. Você **já** está trocando as pernas. (f_003)
you already be.PRS.3SG change.PROG the legs
‘You’re already staggering.’

In the diachronic research, we only found *ainda* following auxiliary verbs (30a), both in the 20th and 21st centuries, which suggests that in this period the auxiliary verb moves to a position above the functional projection lexicalized by *ainda*. Occurrences of *ainda* preceding lexical and auxiliary verbs were also found, although this is no as evidence against the presence of verbal movement. However, since we found postposition of *ainda* only in relation to auxiliaries, it is possible to affirm that the absence of occurrence of postposition of the adverb in relation to lexical verbs is evidence of the absence of this configuration in the period analysed.

(30) **Adverb *ainda***

Eles quase se mataram hoje de manhã, eu vi que ia
 They almost CL kill.PST.3PL today of morning I see.PST.1SG that go.PST.3SG
ainda sobrando para mim e pulei fora (f_003).
 still remain.PROG to CL and jump.PST.1SG out
 ‘They almost killed each other this morning. I saw that I might get caught up in it too, so I got out.’

In relation to *quase*, postposition was only attested in relation to auxiliary verbs (31a), but not with lexical verbs, with which the adverb appeared postposed in all cases (31b).

(31) **Adverb *quase***

- a. Seu Otávio está **quase** brigando no botequim! (g_011)
 S. O. be.PRS.3SG almost fight.PROG in.the bar
 ‘Mr. Otávio is almost getting into a fight at the bar.’
- b. Reclamações do prédio todo – a síndica **quase**
 Complaints from.the building whole the manager almost
 deu na minha cara. (f_003)
 hit.PST.3SG in.the my face
 ‘Complaints from the whole building—the manager almost hit me in the face.’

Unlike the 18th and 19th centuries, the preference for the lexical verb to follow the adverb *sempre* decreased in the 20th and 21st centuries: in this period, the order *sempre* _ V occurred in 80% of the occurrences (32a) and in only 20% with V _ *sempre* (32b). Unlike lexical verbs, auxiliary verbs categorically preceded the adverb *sempre* in the *corpus* (32c).

(32) **Adverb *sempre***

- a. Eu não sou mais criança, não, Maria Lúcia, e vou
 I not be.PST.1SG more child not M. L. and go.PRS.1SG
 logo avisando que eu não vou admitir que vocês me
 soon notice.PROG that I not go.PRS.1SG admit.INF that you CL
 tratem como uma débil-mental como **sempre** fizeram. (f_003)
 treat.PRS.SBJ.3PL as a fool as always have.PST.3PL

‘I’m not a child anymore, Maria Lúcia, and I’m telling you right now that I won’t allow you all to treat me like a fool as you always have.’

b. Você tem **sempre** uma desculpa pronta. (t_001)
 you have.PRS.3SG always an excuse ready

‘You always have an excuse ready.’

c. É por isso que a senhora está **sempre** cansada, vive
 be.PRS.3SG by this that the madame be.PRS.3SG always tired keep.PRS.3SG
 me prometendo pancada! (g_011)
 CL promise.PROG blow

‘That’s why you’re always tired—you keep promising to hit me!’

In the 20th and 21st century data, the adverb *bem* categorically followed auxiliary and lexical verbs, as seen in examples (33a) and (33b) below.

(33) Adverb *bem*

a. Está com os pulmão arrebetando mas bebe **bem**. (g_011)
 be.PRS.3SG with the lung wreck.PROG but drink.PRS.3SG well

‘He’s got his lungs wrecked, but he drinks just fine.’

b. E como é que a gente vai enxergar **bem** com aqueles lençóis
 and how be.PRS.3SG that the people go.PRS.3SG see.INF well with those sheets
 horríveis que tem que usar quando vira fantasma? (g_012)

horribles that have.PRS.3SG that use.PRS.3SG when turn.PRS.3SG ghost

‘And how are we supposed to see well with those horrible sheets we have to wear when we turn into ghosts?’

3.3.1 Summary of 20th and 21st centuries data

To conclude the presentation of the data from the 20th and 21st centuries, in Tables 6 and 7, we summarize the occurrences of lexical and auxiliary verbs in relation to the adverbs observed so far. We can observe that lexical verbs move only over *bem*, but not over *quase*, *sempre*, *ainda* or *já*. Differently, auxiliary verbs, to precede *bem*, *quase*, *sempre* and *ainda*, need to move one position higher than *ainda*, but not more, considering that they cannot precede *já*.

Table 6 – Percentage of lexical and auxiliary verbs in relation to adverbs in the 20th century

	<i>já</i>	<i>ainda</i>	<i>sempre</i>	<i>quase</i>	<i>bem</i>
adv_V	86%	87%	77%		
V_adv	14%	13%	23%		100%
adv_AUX	27%	47%			
AUX_adv	73%	53%	100%	100%	

Table 7 – Percentage of lexical and auxiliary verbs in relation to adverbs in the 21st century

	<i>já</i>	<i>ainda</i>	<i>sempre</i>	<i>quase</i>	<i>bem</i>
adv_V	100%	100%	86%		
V_adv			14%		100%
adv_AUX	100%	64%			
AUX_adv		36%	100%	100%	

3.3.2 Section summary

In this section 3, we have shown the results regarding the positioning of verbs in relation to the adverbs *bem*, *quase*, *sempre*, *ainda* and *já* in the 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. With this diachronic data, we observed that the order of the verb has changed over time. At first, we saw in 3.1 that both lexical verbs and auxiliary verbs could move over *já* and all other lower adverbs. This ordering, as explained in 3.2, was no longer preferred for lexical verbs from the 18th century onwards, although there were still some remnants of the grammar from the previous century. This grammar seemed to resist in the contexts of auxiliary verbs that still preferentially precede the adverb *já* in the 18th century, as in the 17th century. On the other hand, there are no more remnants of a 17th-century grammar in the 19th century: both lexical verbs and auxiliary verbs necessarily follow *já*, but precede all lower adverbs: *ainda*, *sempre*, *quase* and *bem*.

In the 20th and 21st centuries, we observed, in 3.3, once again a change in the ordering of the verb: in this period, lexical verbs no longer precede *ainda*, *quase* and *sempre*, but continue to precede *bem*, unlike auxiliary verbs that continue to precede all these adverbs, except *já*, just as in the grammar of the 18th and 19th centuries. In Table 8, below, we summarize the results regarding the ordering of the Portuguese verb in relation to adverbs over time.

Table 8 - positioning of lexical and auxiliary verbs in relation to adverbs in BP diachrony

Century	Verb	Position	
		Precedes	Does not precede
17	lexical	<i>já, bem, quase, sempre, ainda</i>	-
	auxiliary	<i>já, bem, quase, sempre, ainda</i>	-
18	lexical	<i>bem, quase, sempre, ainda</i>	<i>já</i>
	auxiliary	<i>já, bem, quase, sempre, ainda</i>	
19	lexical	<i>bem, quase, sempre, ainda</i>	<i>já</i>
	auxiliary	precede <i>bem, quase, sempre, ainda</i>	<i>já</i>
20	lexical	<i>bem</i>	<i>já, ainda, quase, sempre</i>
	auxiliary	<i>bem, quase, sempre, ainda</i>	<i>já</i>
21	lexical	<i>bem</i>	<i>já, ainda, quase, sempre</i>
	auxiliary	<i>bem, quase, sempre, ainda</i>	<i>já</i>

4 Discussion

Based on the ordering of the verb in relation to fixed adverbs, we demonstrated in the previous section that Brazilian Portuguese has undergone three periods: **Period 1**, covering the 17th century, in which the grammar generated a flexible V2 system; **Period 2**, spanning the 18th and 19th centuries, in which lexical verbs and auxiliaries no longer preceded *já*; and finally, **Period 3**, covering the 20th and 21st centuries, where verb placement differs according to verb type – lexical verbs do not precede *já, ainda, quase*, and *sempre* but do precede *bem*, unlike auxiliary verbs, which precede all these adverbs except *já*.

Assuming the universal hierarchy of functional projections and following Wolfe's proposal (see Section 1), we observe that in Period 1, both lexical and auxiliary verbs moved to Fin (the left periphery of the sentence), a position that results in their precedence over all lower adverbs including *já*. In Period 2, this movement is no longer attested, with both auxiliary and lexical verbs moving instead to T_{Anterior} , a position where they follow *já* but precede all lower adverbs. Finally, in Period 3, auxiliary verbs continue to move to T_{Anterior} , whereas lexical verbs move to a position lower than the projection where *ainda* is located in $\text{Asp}_{\text{Continuative}}$, *sempre* in $\text{Asp}_{\text{Perfect}}$, *quase* in $\text{Asp}_{\text{Prospective}}$, but higher than *bem* in Voice.

As we have seen, written Portuguese produced by Brazilian authors lost the properties of a flexible V2 language in the 18th century. Based on Chomsky (2008), TP/IP manifests φ -features and Tense features only if selected by C, since T inherits its Tense features from C, which is a phase head (Roberts, 2019). Following Ouali (2008), Biberauer and Roberts (2017) propose that C may either transfer, share, or retain Tense features to account for parametric variation across languages. Accordingly, languages differ depending on whether (i) C transfers Tense features to T, (ii) C shares Tense features with T, or (iii) C retains Tense features. Building on Wolfe's (2018, 2019) proposal that in V2 languages the verb's landing site can be either Force or Fin, we assume that Fin, the lowest functional projection within the C domain (see Section 2), may transfer, share, or retain Tense features.

In V2 languages (except Icelandic, where Tense features are shared with C), Fin retains the Tense feature, meaning that T does not inherit it. Consequently, the verb is forced to move to the left periphery, and as a result, the edge feature attracts an XP to its specifier. Therefore, whether or not Tense features of Fin are inherited plays a crucial role in distinguishing Romance from Germanic languages.

In addition to this, we draw on the discussion raised by Schifano (2018), who, based on the articulated structure of functional projections in (7), proposes that Cinque's (1999) hierarchy can be reduced to three major functional fields: "a high one, where M(ood) is encoded, a clause-medial one, where T(ense) is encoded, and a low one, where A(spect) is encoded" (Schifano, 2018, pp. 134–135). Thus, verb movement is understood as targeting fields within the syntactic structure – e.g., Aspect – rather than specific positions, such as $\text{Asp}_{\text{Frequentative}}$. For our discussion, instead of an articulated structure of functional heads, it is sufficient to assume that IP/TP is structured into Aspectual, Temporal, and Mood fields. In our proposal, in Period 1, the verb moved to Fin; in Period 2, to the Temporal field; and in Period 3, only auxiliary verbs continue moving to the T field, whilst lexical verbs reduce their movement to the Aspect field.

Following Schifano (2018), we adopt the proposal that the property triggering movement to these fields is the presence of an uninterpretable feature [uF] in functional projections such as Fin, T, A, or M. Assuming that ν is always interpretable [iX] for Fin, T, Asp, and M – hence, [$i\text{Fin}$], [iT], [$i\text{Asp}$], and [iM] – Fin, T, Asp, and M may bear either interpretable [$i\text{Fin}$], [iT], [$i\text{Asp}$], and [iM] or uninterpretable [$u\text{Fin}$], [uT], [$u\text{Asp}$], and [uM] features, respectively (note that in this system, features are always valued but may or may not be interpretable). Since uninterpretable features must be deleted as soon as

possible to be legible at the interfaces (Chomsky, 1995, pp. 219–348), the deletion of $[u\text{Fin}]$, $[u\text{T}]$, $[u\text{Asp}]$, and $[u\text{M}]$ carried by Fin, T, Asp, or M takes place *via* a checking relation with the goal ν through movement. Consequently, when probes bear interpretable features matching those of ν , this goal does not move; movement is only triggered when Fin, T, Asp, or M bear an uninterpretable feature, as outlined below:

(34) Features checking amongst ν and Fin, T, A, and M: syntactic corollary

$[\text{Fin}/\text{M}/\text{T}/\text{A}]_{[uX]} [\dots \nu_{[iX]}]$: movement

$[\text{Fin}/\text{M}/\text{T}/\text{A}]_{[iX]} [\dots \nu_{[iX]}]$: absence of movement

Within this framework, a possible explanatory proposal for the different verb orders in relation to adverbs and, consequently, for the various positions to which the verb moves in the diachrony of Brazilian Portuguese (BP) can be outlined as follows.

During the 17th century, when both auxiliary and lexical verbs preceded *já*, thus generating a V2 system, we propose that Fin carried $[u\text{Fin}]$, with the movement of V and AUX – both categories bearing $[i\text{Fin}]$ – being responsible for the deletion of these uninterpretable features. In the subsequent period, covering the 18th and 19th centuries, the loss of uninterpretable features in Fin, a common occurrence in linguistic change (cf. Roberts & Roussou, 2003), meant that its $[i\text{Fin}]$ features ceased to trigger verb movement to this high position. As a consequence, both lexical and auxiliary verbs lost movement to Fin, resulting in a system that was no longer V2. With this loss of movement, both types of verbs came to follow *já* but precede lower adverbs such as *ainda*, *sempre*, etc. This suggests that speakers in the 18th and 19th centuries moved both lexical and auxiliary verbs to the T field, which carried $[u\text{T}]$ features. Once again, in the 20th and 21st centuries, there was a loss of $[u\text{T}]$ features in T, but only concerning lexical verbs: auxiliary verbs continued to move to the T field, checking $[u\text{T}]$ features and preceding lower adverbs than *já*, whereas lexical verbs lost movement to the T field, moving only as far as the Asp field (cf. Cyrino, 2013; Araújo-Adriano, 2023, who argue that lexical verbs in contemporary Portuguese move up to Aspect), where they checked their $[u\text{Asp}]$ features and, consequently, followed aspectual adverbs such as *sempre*, *quase* while preceding very low adverbs such as *bem*. Thus, we observe three distinct periods throughout the history of BP:

(57) a. The grammatical system of BP in the 17th century

$[\text{Fin}_{[u\text{Fin}]} [\text{Mood}_{[u\text{M}]} [\text{Tense}_{[u\text{T}]} [\text{Aspect}_{[u\text{Asp}]} [\nu_{\text{AUX}} - \nu - \text{VP}]]]]]$

b. The grammatical system of BP in the 18th e 19th centuries

$[\text{Fin}_{[i\text{Fin}]} [\text{Mood}_{[i\text{M}]} [\text{Tense}_{[u\text{T}]} [\text{Aspect}_{[u\text{Asp}]} [\nu_{\text{AUX}} - \nu - \text{VP}]]]]]$

c. The grammatical system of BP in the 20th e 21st centuries

[Fin_[iFin][Mood_[iM][Tense_[iT][Aspect_[uAsp][ν - VP]]]]]
 [Fin_[iFin][Mood_[iM][Tense_[uT][Aspect_[uAsp][ν_{AUX}}]]]]]

The perspective we adopt on linguistic change is an emergentist one, deriving from the Parameter Hierarchy framework (Roberts, 2012; Biberauer & Roberts, 2012, 2015; Biberauer & Walkden, 2015; Biberauer, 2017; Roberts, 2019a). This approach follows Chomsky (2005) in arguing that, in order to achieve explanatory adequacy, Universal Grammar (UG) must be as minimal as possible, avoiding a large number of parameters that would differentiate one language from another, as was the case in the traditional parametric approach (Chomsky, 1981). Instead, the Faculty of Language is assumed to be shaped by three factors: UG (Factor 1), primary linguistic data (Factor 2), and principles of computational efficiency (Factor 3).

Given the minimal nature of UG, the core premise of the Parameter Hierarchy approach is that variation “arises from under-specified aspects of UG, and is structured by third-factor properties arising largely from the need for efficient learning” (Roberts, 2012, p. 321). Thus, parameters are not part of UG but are determined by learning strategies during language acquisition (on the relationship between change and language acquisition, cf. Lightfoot, 1979), i.e., an emergent property arising from the interaction of the three factors. The central hypothesis of the Parameter Hierarchy approach is that parametric variation does not affect all lexical items but is restricted to functional items. Consequently, parameterisation emerges when the child entertains different features in functional heads within the lexicon, as formulated in the Borer-Chomsky Conjecture, presented below:

(35) The Borer-Chomsky Conjecture (Baker, 2008, p. 353)

All parameters of variation are attributable to differences in the features of particular items (e.g., the functional heads) in the lexicon.

From this perspective, cross-linguistic differences are a corollary of aggregates of parameter hierarchies, ranging from a feature that is highly spread across functional heads to features that are highly restricted – not to all but to certain functional heads. This results in a taxonomy of parameters (Biberauer & Roberts, 2015, 2012, 2016; Biberauer, 2017; Roberts, 2019):

(36) Types of parameters

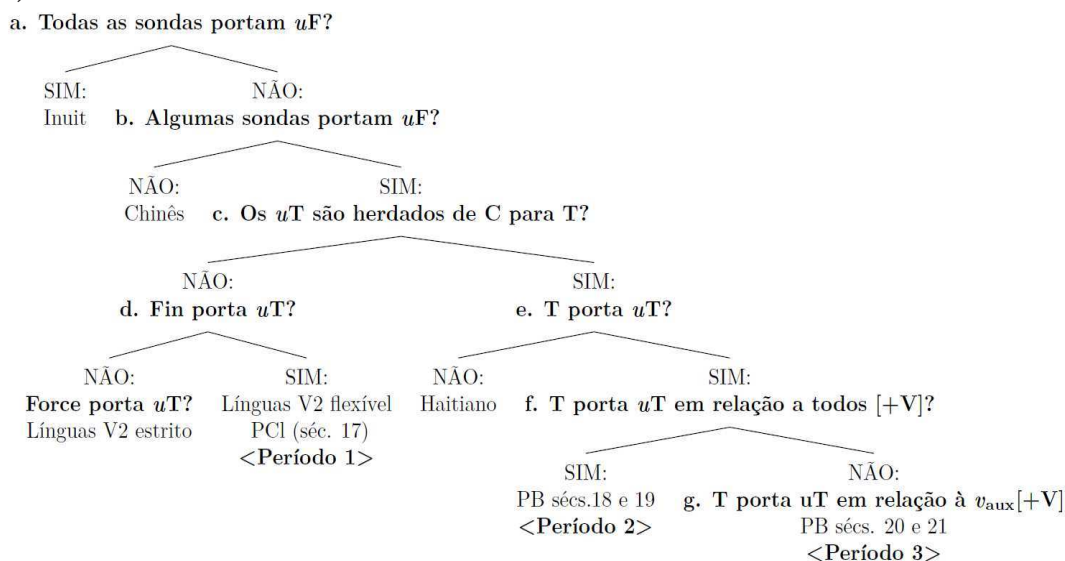
For a given value v_i of a parametrically variant feature F :

- a) Macroparameters: all heads of the relevant type share ν_i ;
- b) Mesoparameters: all functional heads of a given category (*e.g.* all verbal heads, all nominal heads, all ϕ -bearing heads or all finite Cs) share ν_i ;
- c) Microparameters: a small subclass of functional heads (*e.g.* auxiliaries, pronouns) share ν_i ;
- d) Nanoparameters: one or more idiosyncratic lexical items are specified for ν_i .

The taxonomy outlined above combines functional heads and formal features into sets of varying sizes. Thus, macroparameters and mesoparameters are viewed as aggregates of different sizes of microparameters, insofar as they represent distinct distributions of identical formal features across functional heads. Furthermore, these combinations capture seemingly discordant variations without proliferating parameters or formal features and drastically constrain the space of possible grammars by creating dependencies between parameters (Roberts & Holmberg, 2010).

As previously stated, the change observed across the three identified periods can be attributed to the presence or absence of a formal feature born by functional heads. Based on the diachronic results, we identify a period (a) in which Fin bears $[u\text{Fin}]$ in relation to all verbal elements, followed by a period (b) in which Fin loses its $[u\text{Fin}]$ features, thereby reducing the scope of verb movement, with verbs subsequently moving to T due to their $[u\text{T}]$ features in relation to v_{aux} and V. Finally, we observe a third period (c) in which T has restricted its $[u\text{T}]$ features to auxiliary verbs only, becoming $[i\text{T}]$ in relation to lexical verbs. Considering the Parameter Hierarchy approach, we present our explanatory proposal regarding the change in verb order in Brazilian Portuguese.

(37)



In Classical Portuguese, children lacked evidence in their primary linguistic data that all probes carried an uninterpretable feature (for instance, an N did not incorporate into T, as would be the case if the child were exposed to a language such as Inuktitut: *ti-seuan-mU-ban/1SG:see-man-PAST* ‘I saw the man’, Baker, 1996, p. 327). Therefore, it is plausible to assert that children of this period marked NO for (37a). Probes that do not carry an uninterpretable feature instantiate a language such as Chinese, where all heads are “floating”, as in *ben shu/CL* book ‘book’ (Huang, 2015, p. 8). Since Brazilian children have never been exposed to this type of input, they have consistently marked YES for (37b).

The variation across the different periods identified in Brazilian Portuguese originates from where the Tense feature appears, as in (37c). If T features remain in C, then Force or Fin may bear them. If T features remain in Fin, this triggers verb movement to Fin, consequently resulting in a flexible V2 system. If Force, a higher projection than Fin, bears the T features, the outcome is a strict V2 system, in which the verb moves to Force.

What is at stake is whether the T features are inherited by T (37c). In Classical Portuguese and the Portuguese written by Brazilians in the 17th century, T features remain “retained” in Fin, as evidenced in primary linguistic data by object fronting, as in (22a). Thus, children of this period marked NO for (37c). Further evidence that Fin, rather than Force, born [μ F] lies in the occurrence of sentences such as *e [destes] [totalmente] ficam isentos os ricos* (va_017) ‘and [from.these] [totally] be.PRS.3PL exempt the rich’, which exhibits a V>3 order—highly restricted in ForceV2 languages but common in FinV2 languages (cf. section 1).

By contrast, in the Portuguese written by Brazilians in the 18th century, C donates T features to T, as evidenced in primary linguistic data by the loss of object fronting, as in *Todos minha paixão vêm* (b_011) ‘All my passion come.PRS.3PL’. This leads writers born in the 18th century to mark YES for (37c), with a gradual loss of the property of retaining T features and a shift towards donating them to T. Thus, we observe remnants of a V2 system (with OVS order still being attested), particularly concerning auxiliary verbs, as discussed in 3.1. This can be explained by what Kroch (1994, 2001) refers to as grammar competition – a competition between YES and NO for the parameter in (37c).

Also referred to as syntactic diglossia, the competition of grammars reflects a period of covariation between grammatically incompatible options in both speech and writing within a speech community. Diglossic situations would involve the contrast between the more conservative variety (NO for (37c)) and the more innovative variety (YES for (37c)). By linking the process of syntactic change to acquisition (Lightfoot, 1979), it is

assumed that syntactic change relates to a significant alteration in primary linguistic data. This alteration, although ultimately stabilising in an abrupt manner, appears in the data through the competition of grammars, as observed in the 18th century (Kroch, 1994; 2001).

Thus, when confronted with primary linguistic data and having marked YES for parameter (37c), the Brazilian child then determines whether T in their language bears [*u*T] features or not (37e). If exposed to a language in which temporal morphemes are directly inserted in TMA, as in Haitian Creole *Mwen pa kwè pèsonn ap vini* (1SG NEG believe nobody FUT come ‘I do not believe that anyone will come’), a language lacking features that attract V (Roberts, 2017, p. 333), the marked value for (37e) would be NO. In the history of Portuguese, however, primary linguistic data of the Haitian type never existed, which would have led 19th-century Brazilian speakers to mark (37e) with a value other than YES.

Evidence of verbs preceding certain adverbs, such as *ainda* (‘still’), *sempre* (‘always’), *quase* (‘almost’) etc. (e.g., *Não dei **ainda** motivos* ‘no give.PST.1SG still reasons’ / *Tenho **ainda** que comprar um par de botinas e fazer a barba* ‘have.PRS.1SG still that buy.INF a pair of boots and do.INF the beard’ or *O senhor nunca nos incomoda, dá-nos **sempre** muito prazer* ‘the sir never CL bother.PRS.3SG, give.PRS.3SG=CL always great pleasure’ / *Se eu soubesse que havia de ser **sempre** tão feliz, casar-me-ia cinquenta* ‘If I know.PST.SBJ.1SG that have.PST.3SG of be.INF always so happy marry=CL=FUT.PST.3SG fifty’), suggests that writers born in the 18th and 19th centuries had sufficient indications that T bore [*u*T] features in relation to all [+V] elements, encompassing both lexical and auxiliary verbs. Consequently, the value YES was marked for (37f), meaning that all finite verbs were probed by T *via* [*u*T].

Another variation across the different periods observed in Brazilian Portuguese originates from the reanalysis conducted by children in the 18th and 19th centuries regarding the [*u*T] feature of T. Up until the 19th century, Brazilian children had a stable grammar, with their primary linguistic data pointing towards a YES response for the parameter (37f), producing sentences in which both auxiliary and lexical verbs preceded certain adverbs. For external reasons¹² – whether due to principles of economy or language contact – lexical verbs in Brazilian Portuguese lost their temporal interpretations (cf. Cyrino, 2013; Tescari Neto *et al.*, 2021; Araújo-Adriano, 2023). This may account for why children lost evidence of [*u*T] in T concerning lexical verbs. In other words, lexical verbs – but not auxiliaries – ceased to establish a relationship with T, instead becoming associated solely with lower projections, such as Aspect (cf. Cyrino, 2013; Araújo-Adriano,

¹² These are issues that, due to scope limitations, prevent us from engaging in a more in-depth discussion.

2023). Thus, faced with an unstable grammar, children in the 20th and 21st centuries had to process their linguistic data and “move down” the Parameter Hierarchy to determine the optimal parametric solution for their primary linguistic data.

Consequently, data featuring only auxiliary verbs, but not lexical verbs, preceding adverbs such as *ainda* (‘still’), *sempre* (‘always’), and *quase* (‘almost’) no longer conform to the YES response for (37f). As a result, children in the 20th and 21st centuries restricted the elements probed by T to auxiliary verbs alone, stabilising their grammar with a NO response for (37f). Over time, we thus observe distinct parametric settings giving rise to distinct linguistic systems:

- (38) Classical Colonial Portuguese (YES > 38d) >
Colonial Brazilian Portuguese (YES > 38f) >
Modern Brazilian Portuguese (NO > 38f).

Despite being initially developed for synchronic cross-linguistic comparison (Roberts, 2012; Biberauer & Roberts, 2012, 2015; Biberauer & Walkden, 2015; Biberauer, 2017; Roberts, 2019), it is evident that an approach such as the Parameter Hierarchy is also a fruitful framework for diachronic analysis. Just as each parametric setting leads a child to acquire a different target language, in the context of language change, each parametric setting would also lead a child to a different target language – despite these distinct target languages corresponding to different historical stages of the same language.

How, then, does the analysis presented here contribute to re-evaluating existing periodisation proposals? The data provide evidence that verb raising underwent three distinct periods of differentiation. **Period I** – *Classical Colonial Portuguese*: The language transplanted to the colony retains the same pattern as Classical Portuguese. We found evidence – such as the raising of both auxiliary and lexical verbs over the adverb *já* (‘already’) and the occurrence of OVS word order – that texts written by Brazilians in the 17th century exhibit a V2 grammar. **Period II** – *Colonial Brazilian Portuguese*¹³: Lexical verbs lose movement, ceasing to raise over *já*, whilst auxiliary verb raising persists and remnants of OVS order remain. **Period III** – *Modern Brazilian Portuguese*: The loss of verb movement becomes even more pronounced in lexical verbs, though not in auxiliary verbs. Based upon this, we propose the following periodisation.

¹³ We emphasise that the terminology adopted here, although similar, diverges from the proposal put forward by Cardoso, Andrade, and Carneiro (2023). This is because we consider the grammar of what we term Colonial Brazilian Portuguese to bear the hallmarks of a Brazilian vernacular grammar, in contrast to the claims made by those authors.

Nova proposta de periodização para o português brasileiro		
Nossa proposta (2025)		
1ª fase Português Clássico Colonial (até 1700)	2ª fase Português Brasileiro Colonial (1700-1899)	3ª fase Português Brasileiro Moderno (1900-atual)

The periodisation proposed here is based on linguistic evidence, that is, on the internal history of the language. We reaffirm previous proposals that (i) the roots of Brazilian Portuguese emerged in the 18th century, and (ii) there has been a transitional phase between a classical grammar – the language of the caravels (Galves, 2007) – and the grammar of modern BP. Colonial Brazilian Portuguese, as this transitional phase between classical grammar and modern BP grammar, is not merely a reflection of the change from Classical Portuguese to European Portuguese (EP). Instead, it is only superficially influenced by this shift through the process of grammatisation/standardisation, which took place in Brazil, particularly from the second half of the 19th century onwards (cf. Pagotto, 1998). We further argue, following Corôa (2022), that Colonial Brazilian Portuguese bears little resemblance to EP grammar, as, by the 18th century, there were already indications of idiosyncratic phenomena in BP grammar, such as: the restriction of subject inversion to unaccusative verbs, the generalisation of proclisis in matrix sentences, the presence of indefinite subjects, and instances of referential null objects.

Although our proposal is grounded in internal linguistic factors, it also reflects aspects identified in previous periodisation proposals, particularly:

(i) Marlos Pessoa de Barros (2003), as our second phase aligns, to some extent, with what Barros terms *the stage of the formation of common Brazilian Portuguese*, which we refer to as *Colonial Brazilian Portuguese*;

(ii) Volker Noll (2008), whose *differentiation phase*, in which Brazilian Portuguese is formed and diverges from the European variety, corresponds to what we call *Colonial Brazilian Portuguese*.

Finally, we highlight the importance of integrating the findings of this study with the periodisation proposals outlined in the introduction, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the sociohistorical and linguistic factors shaping the diachrony of Portuguese in Brazil.

5 Final Remarks

In this paper, we have discussed the periodisation of Brazilian Portuguese based on evidence from the changing position of the verb in relation to adverbs throughout history. We analysed the positioning of the verb relative to the adverbs *bem* ('well'), *quase* ('almost'), *sempre* ('always'), *ainda* ('still'), and *já* ('already') across the 17th to 21st centuries. Based on this diachronic data, we observed that verb placement underwent three significant shifts over time.

Initially, both lexical and auxiliary verbs could precede *já* and all other lower adverbs. Additionally, we found evidence of object fronting, with OVS word order pointing to a V2-type grammar (Period I). This ordering ceased to be the preferred structure for lexical verbs from the 18th century onwards, although some remnants of the previous grammar persisted. However, in contexts with auxiliary verbs, the earlier grammar appeared to remain stable, as auxiliaries continued to precede *já* in the 18th century, just as in the 17th century. By the 19th century (Period II), however, no traces of the 17th-century grammar remained: both lexical and auxiliary verbs were now required to follow *já*, though they still preceded the lower adverbs *ainda*, *sempre*, *quase*, and *bem*. In the 20th and 21st centuries (Period III), yet another change in verb ordering emerged. During this period, lexical verbs no longer preceded *ainda*, *quase*, or *sempre*, but continued to appear before *bem*. By contrast, auxiliary verbs maintained their tendency to precede all these adverbs except *já*, retaining the pattern observed in the grammars of the 18th and 19th centuries.

We formalised this change within the Parameter Hierarchy framework, proposing that in Period I, uninterpretable features in Fin [*u*Fin] triggered verb movement to Fin, yielding word orders in which the verb preceded all analysed adverbs, consistent with a V2 grammar. In Period II, these features were lost, and Fin came to bear interpretable features [*i*Fin]. During this phase, T bore uninterpretable features [*u*T] for all verbal elements, triggering movement not only of auxiliary verbs but also of lexical verbs. Finally, in Period III, T retained its features in relation to auxiliary verbs but restricted them for lexical verbs, bearing interpretable features [*i*T]. As a corollary, a new pattern of verb movement arose: only auxiliary verbs moved to the T field, whereas lexical verbs moved to a position lower than T.

The data presented here highlight the need to reassess existing periodisation proposals for the history of Portuguese in Brazil. Accordingly, we propose a periodisation that aligns with the significant word order changes identified in this study. The pro-

posed framework is divided into the following phases: Period I, which we term Classical Colonial Portuguese; Period II, referred to as Colonial Brazilian Portuguese; and Period III, designated Modern Brazilian Portuguese.

We acknowledge that further analyses, including investigations of other syntactic phenomena, are necessary to either confirm or challenge the findings presented here. For now, we offer this contribution as a call to re-examine the syntax of past periods, in order to better understand when Brazilian Portuguese grammar actually emerged.

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