

Editorial Statement

MARIA ANTÓNIA MOTA
SILVIA RODRIGUES VIEIRA

The main goal of this thematic issue is to divulge recent advances in linguistic variation studies focused on Portuguese language as spoken in Brazil, Portugal and Africa, to compare the present insights with those proposed by other researchers on the same topic, and to make a contribution to the current debate on this field.

More specifically, this issue provides some of the results of the 2008-2011 Luso-Brazilian Project *Comparative study of agreement patterns in African, Brazilian and European varieties* developed by researchers of the Department of Vernacular Letters, Faculty of Letters, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) and of the Center of Linguistics, University of Lisbon (CLUL). This Project received financial support from CAPES and FCT.

The researchers have been brought together to offer analyses of different aspects of the same topic, the verbal and nominal agreement, in different varieties of African, Brazilian and European Portuguese. The approaches presented in the seven articles are multifaceted, due to the profile of each author's investigation: some follow strictly the standard Labovian Variationist framework, others adopt the general principles of Socio-linguistics combined with other theoretical tools. The objective of all the papers is the same: to provide evidences of the major patterns of agreement found in contemporary standard and non-standard varieties of Portuguese, to compare their relative relevance in different varieties of Portuguese (as L1 in Portugal and Brazil, and as L1 or L2, in Africa), and to understand the linguistic and extra-linguistic factors that may shape the variant types of agreement attested.

The results presented in the different papers are based on linguistic *corpora*, firsthand data specifically collected for the referred Project (the main sample used by the authors) or inherited from other projects of the two

the two institutions involved. As for the main sample, the interviews followed sociolinguistic techniques, aiming at eliciting spoken samples of casual style. The interviewees are from urban zones of Brazil (18 from Rio de Janeiro, 18 from Nova Iguaçu) and of Portugal (18 from Oeiras/Lisboa, 18 from Cacém, both located in the Continental area, and 18 from Funchal, in Madeira Island). For more details, see www.concordancia.letras.ufrj.br. Data collection was carried out between 2008 and 2011 by the researchers and by graduate and post-graduate students, coordinated by the senior members of the Project. The group of interviewees represents a socially stratified random sample, consisting of male and female speakers from three age groups (18-35 years, 36-55 years, 56-75 years) and of three levels of formal education (fundamental: 5-8 years, intermediate: 9-11 years; high: over 11 years). The data from São Tomé and Príncipe used in most of the papers come from the *VAPOR Corpus* (collected by Tjerk Hagemeyer, CLUL). Data collection was also carried out through interviews as undirected as possible, so that the speaker's vernacular could be captured. In order to respect the equilibrium of the samples, the São Tomé interviews extracted from the original *corpus* are in number of 18 or 22, depending on the papers, and they correspond to the same social variables adopted in the main sample.

The sociolinguistic and historical trajectories involving each country are obviously different (in São Tomé, as opposed to Portugal and Brazil, the Portuguese language and the local languages with their varieties cohabit in a multilingual society, the same holding true for other African varieties referred to in some of the papers). But the challenge of the Project was precisely to analyze the variant patterns of agreement in different communities, using data gathered under similar methodological conditions and compatible samples. Those conditions were essential in order to identify and account for the interplay between linguistic phenomena and social variables.

Whenever the authors considered it to be useful for the purposes of comparing varieties and proposing some particular generalizations, some complementary data have been used. The correspondent *corpora* are identified in the respective papers.

We hope that the descriptions of contemporary linguistic data offered in this thematic issue may effectively contribute to the debate on patterns of agreement in different varieties of Portuguese language. For that purpose, the seven articles presented provide empirical validation for new proposals, and reiterate or discuss some previous analyses.

Other works published by the members of the Project and referred to in the present papers will complete the information conveyed in this volume.

All contributions have been submitted to two anonymous peer-reviewers.

Institutional affiliation of the authors:

Célia Lopes, Dinah Callou, Filomena Varejão, Leonardo Marcotulio, Maria Eugênia Lammoglia Duarte, Silvia Figueiredo Brandão, Silvia Rodrigues Vieira: Faculdade de Letras (Departamento/Programa de Pós-graduação em Letras Vernáculas), Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro.

Juliana Vianna, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (collaborator).

Juanito Avelar: UNICAMP (temporary external collaborator).

Amália Mendes: Centro de Linguística da Universidade de Lisboa.

Maria Antónia Mota, Matilde Miguel: Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa/Centro de Linguística da Universidade de Lisboa.

Maria Antónia Mota
Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa
Centro de Linguística
da Universidade de Lisboa
motasaojoao@gmail.com

Silvia Rodrigues Vieira
Faculdade de Letras (Departamento/ Programa
de Pós-graduação em Letras Vernáculas) da
Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro
(Federal University of Rio de Janeiro/FAPERJ)
silviavieira@hotmail.com