

Innovative participles in Brazilian Portuguese

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The investigation of the morphosyntax of participles in natural languages involves questions related to both theories of participles and theories of word formation (Halle & Marantz 1993, Embick 2004, Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 2008, Duarte & Oliveira 2010). The present theoretical proposals for participles and for word formation find problems in explaining that colloquial Brazilian Portuguese (BP) has recently been exhibiting a certain trend in which “irregular” participles are created for verbs that belong to a group which canonically only forms the regular participle.

- (1) Em setembro, o ICV tinha *subo* 0,27%. ‘In September, the ICV had risen 0,27%’
(2) Sobre o que eu tinha *falo*. ‘On what I had said’

Alternating doublets such as *comprado/compro*, *perdido/perco* and *pedido/peço* for the participles of *comprar* (‘to buy’), *perder* (‘to lose’) and *pedir* (‘to ask’), respectively, can be frequently heard among BP speakers.

On a more strictly morphological approach to participles in BP, in general, three groups can be identified:

Group I	verbs which form regular participles, derived by the addition of the morpheme - <i>d(o)</i> to the verb theme: <i>amar</i> (‘to love’) – <i>amado</i> ; <i>temer</i> (‘to fear’) – <i>temido</i> ; <i>partir</i> (‘to leave’) – <i>partido</i> .
Group II	verbs which form irregular participles: <i>fazer</i> (‘to do’) – <i>feito</i> ; <i>pôr</i> (‘to put’) – <i>posto</i> ; <i>cobrir</i> (‘to cover’) – <i>coberto</i>
Group III	verbs which form double participles: <i>limpar</i> (‘to clean’) – <i>limpado/limpo</i> ; <i>pegar</i> (‘to take’) – <i>pegado/pego</i> ; <i>exprimir</i> (‘to express’) – <i>exprimido/expresso</i>

Innovative participles seem to occur to some verbs in group I, which, in the end, will present some similarities with those in group III, at least in the fact that they form two participial forms. When it comes to the formal aspects of the two alternating forms, it has been observed that the innovative participle preserves the verbal stem, but does not realize the participial morphology. To its right edge, it adds the segment *-o*, possibly a form-class marker or thematic suffix. Taking its distribution into account, the new participle will only occur in the perfect context (auxiliary *ter* + uninflected participle) and, in this context, it freely alternates with the regular form, as in (3).

- (3) A Maria tinha *comprado* / *compro* as frutas. ‘Maria had bought the fruits’

The passive version of this sentence can only be well-formed with the regular form of the participle, as in (4).

- (4) As frutas foram *compradas* / **compras* pela Maria. ‘The fruits were bought by Maria’

Two questions arise from these observations: i) how are the innovative forms generated in the grammar of the BP speakers? ii) what restricts their occurrence in passive contexts?

We offer an answer to the first question in terms of the Distributed Morphology approach to grammar. Assuming the analyses for participle morphology suggested in Ippolito (1999) and Medeiros (2008), we argue that the irregular innovative past participles have the same syntactic structure as regular participles, in spite of the fact that they only realize the thematic suffix *-o* attached to verbal stems. The difference between the two forms has to do with their morphological structures (MSs). In this component, both forms will apply morphological operations to the same syntactic structure, which is input for Morphology. However, while the regular past participle form inserts both a verbal theme vowel (VTV) and a nominal (NTV) in

that structure, the innovative form will only insert the NTV. In both cases, the NTV will realize a nominal form class morpheme (\mathfrak{S}), which delimits the word when inserted in the structure. The final configuration for the morphological structure of past participles, mainly in what concerns to the VTV, the past participle morpheme and the NTV, will determine the best candidates for vocabulary insertion in the relevant abstract morphemes. Descriptively, it has been observed that the absence of a VTV seems to lead to the insertion of the vocabulary item (VI) \emptyset in the past participle morpheme, as in *sub- \emptyset -o* and *fal- \emptyset -o*. On the other hand, this morpheme will be realized as /d/ in the presence of a VTV in the morphological structure, as in *sub-i-d-o* and *fal-a-d-o*. Having said that, the syntactic morphological structures for the sentence in (3), would be (5) and (6), respectively:

- (5) $[_{CP} C [_{IIP} I_1 [_{I2P} [_{I2} [_{v1} \sqrt{\text{compr-}} v] [_{I2}_{[PERF]}]] [_{VP} t_1 \dots]]]]]$
 (6) $[_{CP} C [_{IIP} I_1 [_{I2P} [_{I2} [_{v1} \sqrt{\text{compr-}} \emptyset v] [_{I2} [_{I2}_{[PERF]}] \emptyset] [\mathfrak{S} -o]]]] [_{VP} \dots]]]]]$
 (7) VIs: /-nd-/ \leftrightarrow [CONTIN]; /-t-/ \leftrightarrow [] /___ LIST; /-s-/ \leftrightarrow [] /___ LIST; /-d-/ \leftrightarrow []; $\emptyset \leftrightarrow$ [-VTV, PERF]

Our treatment for the innovative participles suggests that a word such as *compro* expressing the innovative past participle results from an independent morphosyntactic derivation. It does not derive from the regular non-rhotonic form, but is the result of an ordinary word formation process in the BP system. No reduction occurs in the morphology or phonology of the word which expresses the regular past participle form (*comprado*, in this case) to create the innovative past participle (see also Lobato 1999a,b, 2000). It is the association of some morphological factors that produces one form or the other. In particular, it is the absence of the VTV in the morphological structure that licenses the insertion of a null VI in the $I_{[PERF]}$ position, resulting in an apparent truncated form for the participle. The analysis predicts the derivation of irregular participles such as *extinto* (from *extinguir* ‘to extinguish’) and *suspense* (from *suspender* ‘to suspend’), which, in spite of not having the VTV head inserted in morphology will not realize the past participle morpheme as \emptyset because a more specified VI, /-t-/ and /-s-/, respectively, wins the competition in these cases.

It can also account for the ungrammaticality of the passive sentence with the innovative participle in (4) in the following way. The data from (8)-(10), in which more complex passive sentences are presented, are evidence for two things: i) similarly to what Ippolito (1999) pointed out for the Italian passive, the Voice $_{[PASS]}$ head in BP seems to be instantiated by the lowest I head (three I heads will be present in the derivation of the well formed sentences in the examples below: I_1 =tense, I_2 =aspect, I_3 =voice, see Ippolito, 1999:123); ii) BP seems to establish a difference between the VIs that compete for insertion in the $I_{[PERF]}$ and those which compete for insertion in the $I_{[PASS]}$ node, the latter not including the null VI (cf. 12).

- (8) As frutas tinham sido *compradas*/**compras* pela Maria. ‘The fruits had been bought by Mary’
 (9) Os alunos tinham sido *expulsos* pelo diretor. ‘The students had been expelled by the principal’
 (10) Os móveis tinham sido *cobertos* por pó. ‘The furniture had been covered by dust’
 (11) $[_{I1} [_{I1}_{[PRES]} [_{I2P} [_{I2}_{[PERF]} [_{I3P} [_{I3} [V_i I_{3[PASS]}] [_{VP} t_i \text{ Obj}]]]]]]]]]$
 (12) VIs: /-t-/ \leftrightarrow [] /___ LIST; /-s-/ \leftrightarrow [] /___ LIST; /-d-/ \leftrightarrow []

References

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