# Number Features on Second Person Possessives in Dialectal Brazilian Portuguese*

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**Abstract:** In standard Brazilian Portuguese (BP), as well as in other Romance languages, possessives have uninterpretable number features, which are valued via nominal agreement. However, dialects of BP, especially the one spoken in Minas Gerais, have shown that 2nd person possessives, in postnominal position, do not have number agreement with the noun. In order to account for these facts, this paper examines the interpretability of number features and the position of the possessive in the DP-hierarchy. Based on Chomsky (2001) and Pesetsky and Torrego (2007), I argue that, in this dialect, number features on postnominal 2nd person possessives are reanalyzed as being: (i) associated with the person (rather than the noun) and (ii) interpretable, which means that they do not trigger nominal number agreement. In addition, based on Danon (2011) and Norris (2014), I argue that, because prenominal 2nd person possessives precede cardinals (NumP), they must be marked with the plural morpheme for nominal agreement; whereas 2nd person postnominal possessives, which follow NumP, must be unmarked. Free from the plural marking associated with nominal features, the latter favors the above-mentioned reanalysis.

## Introduction

In standard Brazilian Portuguese (BP) and in other Romance languages, the possessive pronoun agrees in number with the noun and the determiner. However, dialects of BP, especially the one spoken in Minas Gerais, show a different pattern of number agreement in DPs with 2nd person possessives. In this pattern, there is no agreement in number between the possessive and the noun. As observed in (1), the determiner 'a' and the noun 'gerência' are singular, whereas the possessive 'suas' is marked with the plural morpheme '-s'. In (2), it is the other way round: the possessive 'sua' is singular, whereas the noun 'fotos' is marked with the plural morpheme. This paper presents a proposal to explain why and how this phenomenon occurs.

(1)　　　A　　gerência　　suas　　só atende clientes　grandes.[2]
(Belo Horizonte, June 2016)

The-FEM-SG management-FEM-SG your-FEM-PL  only serve-3SG customer-PL big-PL

*'Your department works only with large business customers'.*

(2)　　　Ana, preciso de fotos　　sua　　pra colocar no site do meu casamento.
(Lavras, April 2016)

Ana   need-1SG of picture-FEM-PL  your-FEM-SG  to put     in-the website of-the my wedding

*'Ana, I need some of your pictures so that I can post them in my wedding website'.*

In order to account for these structures, this paper is organized as follows: firstly, section 1 shows the possessive paradigms in BP (1.1) and then the specificities in dialectal BP (1.2). Secondly, section 2 presents the theoretical background on valuation and interpretability of features (2.1) and on cardinals viewed as a boundary for the DP-internal distribution of the plural morpheme (2.2). Finally, section 3 argues that number features, on the 2nd person possessive, are reanalyzed as interpretable features associated with the person rather than the noun (3.1); and explains why this reanalysis is much more frequent in postnominal position (3.2).

## 1.　The possessive system in BP

This section presents an overview of the possessive paradigm in Brazilian Portuguese (1.1) and then the specificities shown in the dialect spoken in Minas Gerais (1.2).

### 1.1.　The possessive paradigm in BP

The possessive system in BP has pronominal and prepositional forms, as observed in Table 1.

Table 1: The possessive system in BP

|  | Nominative pronouns | Possessive pronouns | Prepositional forms |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 SG | eu 'I' | meu 'my' |  |
| 2 SG | você 'you' | seu 'your' | de você '*of-you-SG*' 'your' |
| 3 SG | ele 'he' | seu 'his' | dele '*of-he*' 'his' |
| 1 PL | nós 'we' | nosso 'our' | da gente '*of-folks*' 'our' |
| 2 PL | vocês 'you' | seu 'your' | de vocês '*of-you-PL*' 'your' |
| 3 PL | eles 'they' | seu 'their' | deles '*of-they*' 'their' |

The pronominal forms may be both prenominal and postnominal and show nominal agreement in gender and in number. In contrast, prepositional forms are strictly postnominal and do not have nominal agreement, but work as follows: 3rd person prepositional forms share the same gender and number features with their co-referent (whether it is overt in the sentence or indexed in the context); 2nd person prepositional forms do not inflect in gender, but share the

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[2] Data from real speech situations are referred throughout this paper with place (city) and date (month and year) of utterance. I have been collecting them over the past five years or so, in the state of Minas Gerais (MG), as part of this research. Many thanks to Marcus for sending several pieces of data from Belo Horizonte and cities nearby.

same number features with their co-referent (whether it is overt – as in vocative position – or indexed in the context); and the 1st person plural prepositional form inflects neither in gender nor in number, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: The possessive system in BP with number and gender inflection

|  | Nominative pronouns | Possessive pronouns | Prepositional forms |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 SG | eu 'I' | **minha(s)** 'my' | |
| 2 SG | você 'you' | **sua(s)** 'your' | de você '*of-you-SG*' 'your' |
| 3 SG | ela 'she' | **sua(s)** 'her' | **dela** '*of-she*' 'her' |
| 1 PL | nós 'we' | **nossa(s)** 'our' | da gente '*of-the folks*' 'our' |
| 2 PL | vocês 'you' | **sua(s)** 'your' | de vocês '*of-you-PL*' 'your' |
| 3 PL | elas 'they' | **sua(s)** 'their' | **delas** '*of-they-FEM*' 'their' |

Tables 1 and 2 roughly summarize what is described by Perini (1985), Kato (1985), Cerqueira (1993), Silva (1996), Müller (1997) and Castro (2001), and do not intend to represent all the views of these authors. For instance, Perini (1985) considers 'de você' ungrammatical, which is not correct (cf. Kato, 1985: 115; Neves, 2000: 473). However, for some reason, 'de vocês' is more common than 'de você'. In addition, the tables do not show possessive forms such as 'teu' (2nd person singular for the nominative 'tu'), which is uncommon in certain regions, though frequent in others.

Therefore, in standard BP, the possessive 'seu' agrees in number and gender with the noun and may refer to either 2nd person plural or 2nd person singular. This is observed in (3), which allows the two possible readings shown in (4a) and (4b).

(3)        Preciso  de dois favores        seus.        ('seus' = 'de você' or 'de vocês')
             Need-1SG of  two  favor-MASC-PL  your-MASC-PL (your-PL = 'of you-SG' or 'of you-PL')
             *'I need two favors from you'.*

(4)    a.    **Amigoᵢ**, preciso de dois favores        seusᵢ!        ('seus' = 'de **você**')
             Friend     need-1SG of two favor-MASC-PL your-MASC-PL (your-PL = 'of you-**SG**')
             *'My friend, I need two favors from you'.*

       b.    **Amigosᵢ**, preciso  de dois favores        seusᵢ!        ('seus' = 'de **vocês**')
             Friends     need-1SG of  two  favor-MASC-PL your-MASC-PL (your-PL = 'of you-**PL**')
             *'My friends, I need two favors from you (guys)'.*

In sum, 'seu', in standard BP, is isomorphic for: 2nd person singular and 2nd person plural.[1]

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[1] Another very well known fact is that, in standard BP, the possessive 'seu' is isomorphic for reference to 3rd person plural (ia) and 3rd person singular (ib).

## 1.2. The 2<sup>nd</sup> person possessive in the dialect spoken in Minas Gerais

In order to make clear the reference to 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural, two different structures may be used: the first and more common one in BP is the prepositional form 'de vocês' (5a); the second one, productive in dialectal BP, is the addition of an '-s' to the possessive pronoun (1; 5b),[2] regardless of which number the DP-internal phrases are inflected for. Likewise, 'seu', without the plural morpheme, is interpreted as referring to 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular, and is not sensitive to nominal concord either, as seen in (2). This is the difference in the dialect spoken in Minas Gerais with regard to the possessive paradigm: 'seu' is for 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular, and 'seus' is for 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural.

(5)  a.  um        favor        de vocês
         a-MASC-SG favor-MASC-SG of   you-PL
         *'a favor from you (guys)'*
     b.  um        favor        seus
         a-MASC-SG favor-MASC-SG your-MASC-PL
         *'a favor from you (guys)'*

This reanalysis is mandatory in this dialect when the possessive is postnominal. However, the prenominal position does not make it often available. Among several data that I have been collecting over the past years, I found only two examples in which the mentioned reanalysis occurs with prenominal possessives. One of them is shown in (6):

(6)      O         seus        carro          não pode ficar estacionado aqui.
         (Ouro Preto, June 2015)
         The-MASC-SG your-MASC-PL car-MASC-SG     not   may   stay   parked        here
         *'Your (guys's) car is not allowed to be parked here'.*

Except by this restriction, the possessive with reanalyzed number features occurs inside a DP, which may contain definite (7) or indefinite articles (11), indefinite pronouns (8), nominal ellipsis (9), and nouns without determiners (2, 10).

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(i) a. Os      moradores$_i$ viram  suas$_i$ casas inundadas.        b. O      morador$_k$ viu  suas$_k$ casas  inundadas.
       The-PL resident-PL  saw    their houses flooded              The-SG resident-SG saw  his    houses flooded
       *'The residents saw their houses flooded out'.*              *'The resident saw his houses flooded out'.*

In addition, in standard BP, 'seu' is ambiguous for reference to 2<sup>nd</sup> person and 3<sup>rd</sup> person:

(ii) "Joana$_i$, vi     Stella$_j$ beijando seu$_{i/j}$     namorado" (Silva, 1996: 172).
      Joana, saw-1SG Stella  kissing    your/her   boyfriend
      *'Joana, I saw Stella kissing your/her boyfriend'.*

[2] Similarly, in some dialects, English 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural may have forms other than 'you': 'yous', 'you-uns', 'you-all', 'you-guys', 'y'all' (Maynor, 2000). As for the 2<sup>nd</sup> person possessive pronoun, the forms 'your guys's' and 'your guyses' are also attested.

(7)     "Para a       sorte       suas,      eu não vou estar aqui na próxima votação."
        (Belo Horizonte, December 2015)

   For    the-FEM-SG luck-FEM-SG  your-FEM-PL I not go-FUT be    here  in-the next voting
   *'For your (guys's) luck, I will not be here in the next election'.*

(8)     "Eu não quero     nada   seus." (Belo Horizonte, March 2014)

    I    not  want-1SG anything your-PL
    *'I do not want anything from you (guys)'.*

(9)     "O          meu      olhar       é diferente do              seus."
        (Belo Horizonte, November 2014)

   The-MASC-SG my-MASC-SG view-MASC-SG is different   of-the-MASC-SG [*e*] your-MASC-PL
   *'My view is different from yours.'*

(10)    "É interesse       seus        aprovar a  proposta."
        (Belo Horizonte, December 2015)

   Is   interest-MASC-SG your-MASC-PL  approve   the proposal
   *'It is in your interest to approve the proposal.'*

(11)    "Gostaria de uma      informação     suas." (Belo Horizonte, January 2016)

   Like-1SG  of  a-FEM-SG information-FEM-SG your-FEM-PL
   *'I would like to get a piece of information from you (guys)'.*

To sum up, in this dialect, the postnominal possessive 'seu': refers to 2nd person plural, when it has the plural morpheme '-s'; and to 2nd person singular, when it does not have '-s'.

## 2.    Theoretical background

This section presents the theoretical background on valuation and interpretability of features (2.1) as well as on the position of cardinals as a boundary for the DP-internal plural marking (2.2).

### 2.1.    The valuation and interpretability of features

The term phi-feature is used to cover broadly the three main categories that involve agreement (person, gender, and number) and that are analyzed under the concepts of valuation and interpretability.

Concerning valuation, according to Pesetsky and Torrego (2007: 263), "Certain features on lexical items appear to come from the lexicon unvalued, and receive their value from a valued instance of the same feature, present on another lexical item". For instance, gender is a property of the noun, and comes valued with the noun from the lexicon. In contrast, D and A are lexically unvalued for gender, and they "get valued as a consequence of a syntactic process of agreement with the gender feature of N" (Pesetsky; Torrego, 2007: 263). The same is true for number, which is lexically unvalued in D and A, though they get "valued as a result of agreement with N" (Pesetsky; Torrego, 2007: 263).

Concerning interpretability, the distinction between interpretable and uninterpretable is related to "whether or not a feature of a particular lexical item makes a semantic contribution to the interpretation of that item" (Pesetsky; Torrego, 2007: 264). For instance, the number feature

of A does not make any contribution to its meaning, while number and person contributes to the interpretation on the DP.

Having made this brief summary on the concepts of valuation and interpretability, it is important to inquire how one can tell whether the noun is lexically valued for number and also how number agreement is triggered inside the DP.

As for the first question, one explanation, according to Pesetsky and Torrego (2007), is related to *pluralia tantum* nouns, such as 'scissors'. These nouns are always plural, which indicates that English nouns come lexically valued for number in the derivation; whereas there is no *pluralia tantum* D or A, which means that they cannot be lexically valued for number. However, not every language has *pluraria tantum* nouns. According to the authors, in Spanish, for instance, genuine *pluralia tantum* nouns do not exist, and this entails a different understanding on the source of number features in this language. Based on previous researches, Pesetsky and Torrego (2007) suggest that Spanish number is in fact a feature of NumP. Similarly, Blühdorn et al. (2008) assume that BP does not have *pluralia tantum*[3], which means that BP nouns are not lexically valued for number. From these facts, I assume that the *locus* of number in BP is NumP, as in Spanish.

As for the second question, under the assignment view, agreement takes place when a probe with uninterpretable features seeks its goal with interpretable features, in order to become valued. Once uninterpretable features have been assigned a value, they must be deleted:

> The natural principle is that the uninterpretable features, and only these, enter the derivation without values, and are distinguished from interpretable features by virtue of this property. Their values are determined by Agree, at which point the features must be deleted [...] The conclusion is appropriate in other respects: the values of uninterpretable features are redundant (Chomsky, 2001: 5).

As opposed to the assignment view just described, one of the consequences of adopting a feature sharing approach is that, after valuation takes place, the feature is not deleted, but is still available for another probe:

> In this respect, the output of the feature sharing version of Agree […] is the same as the output of the assignment version of Agree […] H now contains valued F. Of course, F on H may now serve as the goal for some later operation of Agree triggered by an unvalued, higher instance of F serving as a new probe. The result will be a single feature F shared by three positions, as the process could iterate further (Pesetsky; Torrego, 2007: 268).

In sum, D and A probe NumP (in some languages or NP in others) as the goal for number feature valuation. The next section (2.2) will show how this mechanism applies to BP. However,

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[3] In BP, 'óculos' ('glasses') is not always understood as plural. In fact, against what is prescribed in traditional grammars, it is often used with modifiers in the singular. In addition, most speakers understand that "o óculos" (the-SG glasses) refers to only one pair of glasses, while "os óculos" (the-PL glasses) refers to more than one pair.

before that, the relation between the position of numerals and the DP-internal plural marking needs to be addressed.

## 2.2.    Cardinals and the DP-internal distribution of the plural morpheme

According to Danon (2011) and Norris (2014), in several languages, such as Finish and Estonian, cardinals work as a boundary dividing the DP into two domains in which phrases preceding the cardinal are marked for plural while phrases following it are unmarked. In   Pereira  (2016c),   I assume that this prediction applies to non-standard BP. For instance, in (12), the position of NumP in the DP functions as a clear boundary allowing the elements above it to be marked with plural and leaving unmarked the elements under its c-command domain, as represented in (13).

(12)

|  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|
| a. | Os   único balde   vermelho | a'. | Os   **dois** único balde   vermelho |
|  | The-PL only-$\phi$  bucket-$\phi$[4] red-$\phi$ |  | The- PL two  only-$\phi$ bucket-$\phi$ red-$\phi$ |
|  | *'The only red buckets'* |  | *'The only two red buckets'* |
| b. | Os   únicos balde   vermelho | b'. | Os   únicos **dois** balde vermelho |
|  | The- PL only- PL bucket-$\phi$ red-$\phi$ |  | The- PL only- PL two  bucket-$\phi$ red-$\phi$ |
|  | *'The only red buckets'* |  | *'The only two red buckets'* |
| c. * | O   únicos baldes   vermelho | c'. * | O únicos **dois** baldes  vermelho |
|  | The-$\phi$ only- PL bucket- PL red-$\phi$ |  | The-$\phi$ only- PL two bucket- PL red-$\phi$ |
|  | *'The only red buckets'* |  | *'The only two red buckets'* |

(13)        For (12a/a'): [$_{DP}$ $_D$Os [$_{\textbf{NumP}}$(**dois**) [$_{AgrP}$ [$_{AP}$único [$_{AgrP}$balde$_i$ [$_{AP}$vermelho [$_{NP}$$t_i$]]]]]]][5]

In (12), only the phrases preceding the cardinal are marked for plural. Therefore, in (12a, a'), the determiner is marked with the plural morpheme; and, in (12b, b'), both the determiner and its most adjacent adjective are marked. In contrast, (12c, c') is ruled out both (i) because phrases located to the left of the cardinal are not marked with the plural morpheme, when they should be, and (ii) because phrases located to the right of the cardinal are marked with the plural morpheme, when they should not be.

This assumption reveals that the plural marking is explained by the syntactic hierarchy of the DP. As a result, it challenges current proposals, which argue for an "autonomous morphological component […] independent from syntax" (Costa; Figueiredo Silva, 2006: 44) and suggest that BP would have a "singleton" plural morpheme (14a) to be contrasted with a "dissociated" one in European Portuguese (14b). As pointed out by Castro and Pratas (2006: 18), this proposal does not account for the facts: "In most cases the plural marker seems to surface as

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[4] This paper glosses phrases unmarked for plural with the symbol '$\phi$'.

[5] According to Cinque (2005), the universal order of the DP-internal functional projections is: [DP NumP AP NP]. Other possible linear word orders are explained by movement of the NP as an XP to the Spec of AgrP positions, which are merged with each functional projection in the DP-structure. For instance, in (13), the postnominal position of 'vermelho' is derived by moving the NP to Spec,AgrP, a position higher than the AP.

a singleton, but in others the plural is marked in two different positions […] these patterns must be subject to further investigation".

(14) a.    "Os    primeiro livro    da    biblioteca"
         The-PL first-SG[6]    book-SG   of-the  library
         *'The first books of the library'* (Costa; Figueiredo Silva, 2006, p. 28)

    b.    "Todos os    meus primeiros livros bonitos"
         All-PL   the-PL my-PL first-PL    book-PL pretty-PL
         *'All my first pretty books'* (Costa; Figueiredo Silva, 2006, p. 28)

In addition, assuming the concepts described in section (2.1), the valuation of number features, in an example such as (12a, a'), can be described in (15), which means that number features come lexically valued neither with D nor with N, but with Num.

(15) a.    D, A, and N are lexically uninterpretable and unvalued for number;
    b.    NumP has interpretable and valued number features;
    c.    D probes NumP, the closest in its c-command domain, and gets valued;
    d.    A and N are under the c-command of NumP and constitute a chain sharing the same unvalued number features;
    e.    A probes Num and gets its number features valued;
    f.    As a consequence of being in a chain with A, N and the lowest A get their number features valued as well.

Therefore, (12) complies with the assumption made by Danon (2011) and Norris (2014) that the numeral delimits a DP-internal boundary, which: on the one hand, marks for plural what is on its left; and on the other hand, leaves unmarked what is on its right.

## 3.    Analysis

In this section, I explain: firstly, how the mentioned reanalysis happens, in terms of φ-feature interpretability and valuation (3.1); and secondly, why the postnominal position is more suitable for this, in terms of the DP-internal distribution of the plural morpheme (3.2).

### 3.1.    Possessive number φ-features in dialectal BP

Possessives "combine two independent features for number: the first one is related to person, the other one is related to the DP"[7] (Zribi-Herts, 1998: 151, my translation). For instance, 1st person possessive pronouns have two number layers (Table 3): the number associated with the person

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[6] The gloss with '-SG' is quoted exactly as in the original. However, unless it is a quotation, throughout this paper, elements that are unmarked for plural, in plural DPs, are glossed with 'φ'. Glossing them with '-SG' is inaccurate, because these elements are not inflected for singular in these data; they are just not marked morphologically for plural.

[7] "les possessifs (...) combinent deux traits de nombre indépendants, le premier, solidaire de la marque de personne, l'autre étant celui du DP" (Zribi-Herts, 1998: 151).

('meu' versus 'nosso') is interpretable, while the number associated with the noun ('meu' versus 'meus' or 'nosso' versus 'nossos') is uninterpretable.

Table 3: Combination of number features on $1^{st}$ person possessives

| $1^{st}$ person | | Person number | Noun number |
|---|---|---|---|
| meu | *my*-MASC-SG 'my' | SG | SG |
| meus | *my*-MASC-PL 'my' | SG | PL |
| nosso | *our*-MASC-SG 'our' | PL | SG |
| nossos | *our*-MASC-PL 'our' | PL | PL |

These two layers are not so distinctively specified with $2^{nd}$ person possessives (Table 4). In standard BP, the layer on person features is unspecified for number, which means that 'seu(s)' is ambiguous between $2^{nd}$ person plural and $2^{nd}$ person singular.

Table 4: Number features on $2^{nd}$ person possessives in standard BP

| $2^{nd}$ person | | Person number | Noun number |
|---|---|---|---|
| seu | *your*-MASC-SG 'your' | - | SG |
| seus | *your*-MASC-PL 'your' | - | PL |

In contrast, the dialect spoken in Minas Gerais inverts this pattern (Table 5), which means that 'seu' is specified for $2^{nd}$ person singular, and 'seus' for $2^{nd}$ person plural.

Table 5: Number features on $2^{nd}$ person possessives in dialectal BP

| $2^{nd}$ person | | Person number | Noun number |
|---|---|---|---|
| seu | *your*-MASC-SG 'your' | SG | - |
| seus | *your*-MASC-PL 'your' | PL | - |

To sum up, dialectal Brazilian Portuguese reanalyzes number features on the $2^{nd}$ person possessive as being the number of the person and as being interpretable. Therefore, the plural morpheme '-s', on $2^{nd}$ person possessives, does not reflect nominal number agreement.

## 3.2. $2^{nd}$ person possessives in the DP-hierarchy: prenominal versus postnominal positions

This section is focused on the following question: why does the postnominal position favor the reanalysis explained above, while the prenominal position does not?

In section 2.2, I assumed that cardinals function as a boundary which divides the DP into two domains: the one above NumP is marked with the plural morpheme, whereas the one below NumP is unmarked. This prediction applies straightforwardly to possessives in plural DPs of non-standard BP. As shown in (16a), the article 'os' and the possessive 'seus', which precede the cardinal numeral, are marked for plural; whereas the noun 'carro' and the adjective 'novo', which follow the cardinal, are unmarked.

(16)  a.  Não vi [os            seus        (dois) carro novo].
           Not  saw the-MASC-PL your-MASC-PL two   car-ϕ  new-ϕ
           *'I did not see your two new cars'.*

      b. * Não vi [os            dois seu        carro novo].
           Not  saw the-MASC-PL two  your-MASC-ϕ car-ϕ new-ϕ
           *'I did not see your two new cars'.*

      c.   Não vi  [o            seus        carro novo].
           Not  saw the-MASC-ϕ your-MASC-PL car-ϕ new-ϕ
           *'I did not see your new cars'.*

      d. * Não vi [os            seu         carro novo].
           Not  saw the-MASC-PL your-MASC-ϕ car-ϕ  new-ϕ
           *'I did not see your new cars'.*

      e. * Não vi [os            único seu        carro novo].
           Not  saw the-MASC-PL only-ϕ your-MASC-ϕ car-ϕ  new-ϕ
           *'I did not see your unique new cars'.*

In prenominal position, the possessive precedes cardinals (16a). For this reason, it is always marked with the plural morpheme, in plural DPs. In fact, the definite article is allowed to be unmarked (16c), but never is the possessive (16d). Therefore, (16c) may apparently represent a problem for the analysis I am assuming, because, as the article is located to the left of NumP, it should be marked for plural as well as the possessive. However, it has been observed that, when the definite article co-occurs with prenominal possessives, "the definite article […] is not the marker of definiteness, and is just an expletive" (Costa; Figueiredo Silva, 2006: 40). According to this view, being an expletive determiner, the definite article is allowed to be dropped or to appear without plural marking.

My reading of these facts is that the definite article, when co-occurring with prenominal possessives, forms, with the prenominal possessive, only one phrase (DP) in which the article is the specifier (Spec,DP), while the possessive is the head (D). The strongest evidence for this is the adjacency between the article and the prenominal possessive, which has already been observed in the literature (Castro, 2001: 611). For instance, in (16b), the cardinal does not intervene between the article and the possessive, nor does an adjective (16e). As the definite article and the prenominal possessive form together a single phrase, the specifier (the article) is optionally marked with the plural morpheme, while the head (possessive) is mandatorily marked.

In view of this, the prediction in which NumP divides the DP into two domains applies: the DP (containing the article and the possessive) is above NumP, as shown in (20a), which makes it get the plural marking. The fact that the article may be optionally marked does not cause any problem for this prediction, because it is inside a phrase whose head is already marked.

To sum up, in (16c), the 2$^{nd}$ person possessive: (i) is in a plural DP; (ii) is prenominal; (iii) is a determiner; (iv) is a D-head; (v) has uninterpretable number features; (vi) has its number features valued by NumP; (vii) must be marked with the plural morpheme, which represents nominal number features; (viii) has agreement in nominal concord; and (ix) may refer to either 2$^{nd}$ person singular or 2$^{nd}$ person plural.

Having said that, I will compare (16c) with (6), both repeated below. In these data, the DP-internal distribution of the plural morpheme '-s' looks the same (17).

(16)    c.    Não vi [o            seus            carro] novo.
              Not saw the-MASC-ϕ  your-MASC-PL  car-ϕ   new-ϕ
              *'I did not see your new cars'.*

(6)           [O            seus            carro]            não pode ficar estacionado aqui.
              (Ouro Preto, June 10th, 2015)
              The-MASC-SG your-MASC-PL car-MASC-SG  not  may   stay   parked        here
              *'Your (guys's) car is not allowed to be parked here'.*

(17)          D[--]  Poss[-s]   Noun[--]

Nonetheless, as discussed in previous sections, in (6), although the possessive is prenominal, it: (i) is in a singular DP; (ii) has interpretable number features associated with the person; (iii) does not have its number features valued by NumP; (iv) does not have agreement in nominal concord; and (v) refers to 2nd person plural only.

Therefore, the structure in (17), for "o seus carro", is syncretic for two readings (18). Due to this syncretism, the formula in (17) represents in fact two possible different structures. The one in (19a) refers to the reading in (18a), whereas the one in (19b) refers to the reading in (18b).
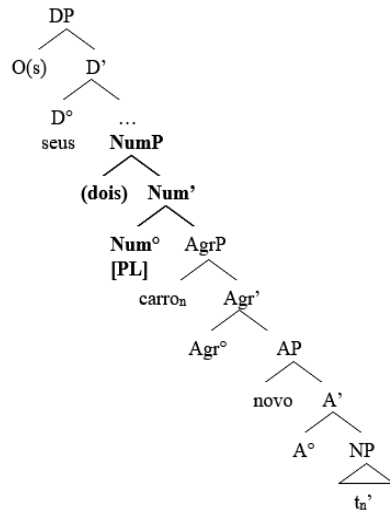
(18)    a.    The DP is plural, and the '-s' on the possessive indicates DP-internal agreement.
        b.    The DP is singular, and the '-s' on the possessive indicates 2nd person plural.
(19)    a.    D[-ϕ ] Poss[-s] Noun[-ϕ ]
        b.    D[-SG] Poss[-s] Noun[-SG]

This structural syncretism explains why sentences like (6) are so uncommon, though not impossible. The possessive in prenominal position is mandatorily marked with the plural morpheme for nominal concord, which makes it resistant to the reanalysis described above. A sharp contrast is shown by the postnominal possessive. It is prevented from being marked with the plural morpheme for nominal concord, which makes it free for the reanalysis to occur.

This contrast is also evident in the DP-hierarchy. In (16c), the possessive is a D-head (20a); whereas, in (1), repeated below, the postnominal possessive is the specifier of a functional projection (PossP), which is merged lower in the DP (20b).

(1)           A            gerência            suas            só atende clientes    grandes.
              (Belo Horizonte, June 2016)
              The-FEM-SG management-FEM-SG your-FEM-PL  only serve-3SG customer-PL big-PL
              *'Your department works only with large business customers'.*

(20)　a.　For (16c):　　　　　　　　　(20)　b.　For (1):

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            DP                                      DP
           /  \                                    /  \
        O(s)   D'                                       D'
              /  \                                     /  \
            D°    ...                                D°    ...
           seus   NumP                               a    NumP
                 /   \                                     |
             (dois)  Num'                                 Num'
                    /   \                                 /   \
                 Num°    AgrP                          Num°    AgrP
                 [PL]   /                              [SG]   /
                    carro_n  Agr'                        gerência_n  Agr'
                            /   \                                   /   \
                         Agr°    AP                              Agr°    PossP
                                /  \                                    /   \
                             novo   A'                               suas   Poss'
                                   /  \                                    /   \
                                 A°    NP                              Poss°    NP
                                       /\                              2ndPL    /\
                                      t_n'                                     t_n'
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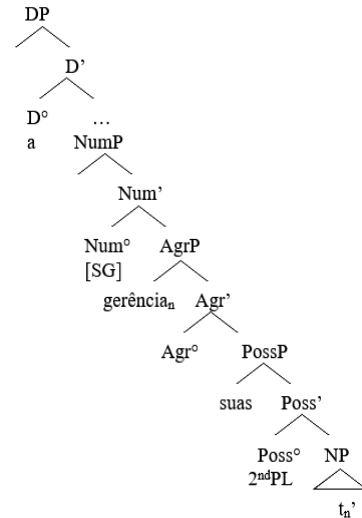
In sum, this section began with the following question: why does the postnominal position favor the reanalysis (of the possessive number features), while the prenominal position does not? The answer is the following: prenominal possessives are in a phrase (DP)[8] located above NumP; as such, they must receive the plural marking associated with nominal agreement. In contrast, postnominal possessives are in a phrase (PossP) located below NumP; as such, they must not receive this mark. Being free from this mark, the latter is suitable for the mentioned reanalysis to take place.

## Conclusions

In standard Brazilian Portuguese (BP), as well as in other Romance languages, possessives have uninterpretable number features, which are valued via nominal agreement. However, dialects of BP, especially the one spoken in Minas Gerais, show that postnominal 2nd person possessives do not have number agreement with the noun. In order to account for these facts, I analyzed the interpretability of number features and the positions of the possessive in the DP-hierarchy.

With respect to the interpretability of features, I have claimed that, in this dialect, number features on 2nd person possessives are reanalyzed as being: (i) associated with the person and (ii) interpretable. From the first postulation, 'seu' is expected to be the possessive for 2nd person singular, and 'seus' for 2nd person plural. From the second postulation, no nominal number agreement is triggered on the possessive, which means that there is neither "mismatch" of agreement with the noun, as one could presume, nor even agreement with something else, such as "possessor" or "addressee".[9]

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[8] Brito (2007) explains that prenominal possessives are D (clitics adjoined to determiners), in varieties of European Portuguese (EP) in which the possessive has a reduced form (i) and is adjacent to determiners.

(i) "os me livros" -  The-PL my(reduced) book-PL – My books (BRITO, 2007, p. 45).

In BP, no phonological reduction of the type given in (i) happens, which means that the prenominal possessive in BP cannot be analyzed as a clitic adjoined to the determiner, but as a determiner itself (X°).

[9] As such, the analysis carried out in this paper reformulates and prevails over other hypotheses proposed in previous stages of this research (Pereira, 2015, 2016a, 2016b). Concerning Pereira (2016b), it is reasonable to assume, in

Furthermore, with respect to the DP-hierarchy, I have claimed that cardinals divide BP DPs into two domains in that phrases preceding NumP are marked with the plural morpheme, whereas phrases following it are unmarked. The prenominal possessive precedes cardinals and hence must be marked, whereas the postnominal possessive must be unmarked. That is why the reanalysis of number features takes place in the latter.

To conclude, assuming that the 2nd person possessive has its number features reanalyzed explains why they are independent of the number for which the DP-internal phrases are inflected. Finally, assuming that the DP is divided into two domains, with regard to the DP-internal plural marking, explains why the postnominal position favors the mentioned reanalysis.

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terms of co-reference rather than agreement, that 2nd person possessives share the same number feature of their co-referent (which may be overt, as a vocative, in the SaP).

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