

CONSTRUCTIONS WITH THE PRONOUN SE AND THE IMPERSONALIZATION: REFLECTIONS ON TEACHING

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In Brazilian Portuguese, there are some constructions that can be activated in order to remove the participant who is responsible for the action or process from the scene. However, in Portuguese language classes, in regular education, we realize that the priority is given to working with only the perspective of indeterminacy. Thus, accordantly to such treatment, only two strategies (predicted in traditional grammars) that can be used in order to defocus the discursive third person are considered: use of the verb in the third person plural and the use of indirect transitive verb or intransitive verb plus SE pronoun. Furthermore, we realize that this indeterminacy is always associated with the study of the syntactic function of the subject, especially with regard to the classification of the indeterminate subject.

Among the various constructions that can promote impersonalization in Brazilian Portuguese, we study, in this article, the variation in the uses of three allostrusctions. They Are: (i) {[[Direct Transitive Verb]simple predicate + clitic pronoun SE] [Participant 2 (nonverbal element)]}predication (**Analisam-se** cláusulas justapostas/We (They/One) analyse juxtaposed clauses); (ii) {[Verb TER + clitic pronoun SE]simple predicate [Participant 2, (nonverbal element)]} predication (**Tem-se** a análise das representações / We (someone) have analysis of the representations) and (iii) {[(Semi)auxiliary Verb + clitic pronoun SE + Direct

Transitive Verb]complex predicate [Participant 2 (nonverbal element)]}predication (**Buscou-se analisar** estas estruturas / Someone sought to analyze these structures).

The constructions described in (i) and (iii) can be activated with the aim of removing the first or third discursive person from the scene; the construction presented in (ii) in turn, can be used in existential sentences, without the projection of a participant 1 and also to promote the demotion of the discursive first person.

Direct transitive predications with the pronoun -SE are mostly used in written texts. For the composition of the corpus of analysis of this research, we consider, then, journalistic texts (opinion articles and editorials) and academic texts (thesis and dissertations). We realize that the constructions presented in (i) and (iii) are more used in journalistic texts with the functionality of promoting the defocusing of the discursive third person (who is spoken) and in academics to promote the defocusing of the discursive first person (the one who speech). On the other hand, the construction presented in (ii) is more used in academic texts, with few uses in journalistic texts that reveal the context of existentiality, in which the aforementioned construction enters into competition with the verbal form “há” (**Tem-se/há** no Rio uma Polícia Militar altamente letal / There is a highly lethal Military Police in Rio).

To investigate the phenomenon of variation and the and the activation of direct predicative constructions with the pronoun SE, we considered the theoretical methodological assumptions of the socioconstructionist theory (MACHADO VIEIRA, 2016, 2017; WIEDEMER; MACHADO VIEIRA, 2018), the constructionist and cognitivist ones (BYBEE, 2013, 2010; CAPPELLE, 2006; FILLMORE, 1982; GOLDBERG, 1995, 2006; LANGACKER, 1987, 1991, 2008; TRAUGOTT; TROUSDALE, 2013).

We also consider that the direct transitive predications with the pronoun SE can be analyzed from the proposal of a *continuum* of impersonalization, in which, through it, it is possible to evaluate, in some cases, the articulation of the first and second discursive persons, and also, from the first person plural, in which the author of a text demonstrates, for example, the opinion of a certain group in which he also finds himself.

Furthermore, we highlight, in this *continuum*, the cases of emptying of referencing, in which we are unable to identify a person responsible for the predication (contexts of causality) and, in the case of the construction PredicateTER + SE, there is a predication without a participant (context of existentiality)

Thus, we defend a teaching proposal for impersonalization that is disassociated from the syntactic function of the subject and that seeks an association with the

treatment of the discursive people. Therefore, in this article, we also deal, in the background, with other impersonalization strategies available in the language, namely: analytical passives, some pronominal forms with indeterminate value and the use of nominal expressions.

At the end of the article, we will propose an activity that can be used in the classroom, especially with high school students, which seeks to present the various impersonalization strategies, with real examples of usage of various constructions that were extracted from newspapers, magazines, ENEM newsrooms, tweets. In this activity proposal, we highlight out the following points that we deem relevant to approach the theme of impersonalization in the classroom. They are:

- (i) in the first place, it is necessary to disarticulate the teaching of indeterminacy from the syntactic function of indeterminate subject and, to suck, consider the proposal for the presentation of *expressed subject* vs. *unexpressed subject* and *determined* vs. *indetermined*, discussed in Duarte (2006), because , there are several cases of the subject's position filled with indeterminate reference, as in the example “**A galera** que estava aglomerando feliz pela vacina” (The people who were happy for the vaccine), in which we have the subject filled by the SN “a galera”, but with indeterminate reference;
- (ii) pay attention to the point that indeterminacy is configured as a subcategorization of impersonalization and, in this way, articulate its study with the analysis of discursive people who may be involved in predication;
- (iii) to note that when direct transitive constructions with the pronoun SE are triggered, there is a syntactic arrangement a focal adjustment (Cf. LANGACKER, 1987) that allows the emphasis to be given to the event itself and not on who is the responsible participant for a given action or process;
- (iv) considering that the opacification of the discursive first person is more common in academic texts. There is a linguistic tradition in Brazil that still recommends a search for a more objective writing, that is, without personality marks. The constructions with the pronoun SE are utilized in academics works when the researcher needs to position themselves or, for example, map the actions of the research step by step;
- (v) it is necessary to reflect that the opacification of the discursive third person is more common in journalistic texts because, in opinion articles and editorials, the journalist often needs to report actions/opinions of public personalities, such as politicians and when triggering impersonalizing strategies are activated, there is the preservation of his/hers face.

We emphasize that it is always important to introduce students to the various possibilities that language offers us to promote the defocusing of the participant 1. It is also necessary to consider that every discourse is linked to its enunciator and that a total objectivity is an abstraction. However, it is essential for the student to be able to perceive the motivations that lead the language user to make use of constructions that promote the demotion of the person responsible for the predication.