Constructions with *SE* in African varieties of Portuguese

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Introduction

Portuguese is the official language of five African countries, Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and S. Tome and Principe. In the case of Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and S. Tome and Principe, Creole languages have emerged and are widely used, resulting in Portuguese being spoken by a minority, while in Angola and Mozambique the number of Portuguese speakers has increased since independence from Portugal (in 1975) and Portuguese has established itself as a factor of national unity, in the face of a large diversity of languages spoken by the population. Five corpora of these African varieties of Portuguese (AVP) have recently been compiled (Bacelar do Nascimento *et al.* 2006) and have enabled initial contrastive studies on the lexicon and on the syntax, pointing to specific linguistic aspects where AVP differ from the European Portuguese (EP) norm. This paper will focus on the specific case of constructions with *SE*, ranging from reflexive and reciprocal, intrinsically pronominal, passive, impersonal or anticausative, under a contrastive perspective with EP, and will be based on data collected from the spoken subpart of the Corpus Africa.

1.   Corpus of African varieties of Portuguese

Our analysis is based on data from five comparable corpora of the African Varieties of Portuguese recently compiled at CLUL and grouped together as the Corpus Africa[1], a 3 million-word corpus. The five corpora are compara-

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[1]   The Corpus Africa, available for online queries at CLUL's webpage (www.clul.ul.pt), was compiled and explored in the scope of the projects "Linguistic Resources for the Study of the African Varieties of the Portuguese", of the Center of Linguistics of the University of Lisbon (CLUL) and of the Center of Theoretical and Computational Physics of the University of Lisbon (Funding: FCT and Fundação C. Gulbenkian), and "Properties of the African Varieties compared with the European Portuguese" (Funding: Fundação C. Gulbenkian). The corpus is available for online queries at CLUL's webpage (www.clul.ul.pt).

ble in size (c. 640,000 words each), in chronology (the last 30 years), and in types and genres (c. 25,000 spoken words (4%) and c. 615,000 written words (96%)). Their internal constitution is presented in Table 1 below[2].

Table 1: Constitution of the five comparable corpora

Internal constitution			
Spoken corpus	Informal discourse	45 men	80% high educated 20% medium educated	4%
		35 women		
Written corpus		Literary book	19%
		Newspaper	52%
		Varia	25%

The corpora were further tagged and lemmatized. Five lexicons have been extracted from the corpora, one per each variety, comprising lexical items from the main categories of Common Name, Adjective and Verb, as well as a category for Foreign Words. For each lexical item, the following information is specified: Part-of-Speech, lemma and index of frequency in the corpus. A total number of 25,523 lemmas have been described: 14,666 (57%) Nouns, 6,268 (25%) Adjectives, 4,292 (17%) Verbs and 297 (1%) Foreign Words. The lexicons of the different varieties have been compared and treated statistically, in the form of contrastive lists, with data of frequency and distribution[3]. Furthermore, these lexicons have enabled the extraction of the core vocabulary or nucleus of the five corpora (Nelson 2006), i.e., the common lexicon to all five varieties, as well as the peripheral vocabulary, i.e., that area of the lexicon where, in the corpus, overlapping between varieties does not occur. The common vocabulary to the five corpora is composed of 26% of the lemmas but corresponds, in fact, to 91.75% of occurrences in the corpus.

Compared to the amount of corpus-based studies on European Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese, the shortage of studies on the Portuguese spoken in Africa is mostly due to the lack of language resources. In the case of Mozambique, however, a spoken corpus has been compiled and several studies have been undertaken and published (Gonçalves 1990; Stroud/Gonçalves 1997a, 1997b; Gonçalves/Stroud 1998, 2000, 2002).

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[2] The corpus of the variety of Mozambique includes the spoken corpus compiled by Perpétua Gonçalves (Gonçalves 1990).
[3] The contrastive lexicon is available at CLUL's webpage for download (www.clul.ul.pt).

The five new corpora of AVP are the first step towards contrastive linguistic studies of the Portuguese Varieties of African countries where Portuguese is the official language and is spoken as a second or foreign language (Bacelar do Nascimento *et al.*, 2006, 2007). Preliminary studies based on these corpora point to several areas where a higher degree of deviation occurs, like verb complementation, at the lexicon-syntax interface, where African varieties of Portuguese diverge widely from European Portuguese (EP). Nevertheless, each AVP shows an important internal variation regarding verb complementation, either converging or diverging from EP patterns. Despite the variation encountered the analysis of the data from the five comparable corpora points to some general tendencies.

AVP also differ from the European norm at syntactic level, for example, in the absence or incorrect use of the definite and indefinite article or in the choice and position of the clitics, and at the morphosyntactic level, in verbal and nominal agreement and in the use of the verbal tense and mood, among other aspects.

The use of verbal constructions with *SE* in AVP, where *SE* can be either a clitic pronoun or a functional element, is another area where specific contexts were found, and will be the topic of our paper. Constructions with *SE* is in fact a generic term used in this paper to cover very different structures with one common property: the possible syntactic realisation of the element *SE* in association with a verbal predicate. In all these constructions the clitic element can occur, although its functional properties can vary. This aspect has already been treated in Gonçalves (1990, 1996) regarding the variety of Mozambique. Our objective is to analyze these constructions under a contrastive perspective for the five varieties and, furthermore, to distinguish between the different types of constructions with the element *SE*. Although each AVP has to be observed as a single entity undergoing a path of linguistic change, this path has its origin in European Portuguese and it is consequently essential to contrast AVP to the European norm and its use.

2.   Contrastive approach to constructions with *SE*

In this section, we will review the different constructions with *SE* which are possible in EP and observe the occurrences found in the corpus of AVP. The properties of EP are essential to provide a "descriptive basis" (Gonçalves 1990) and it is in comparison to this European variety that one is able to

describe changes over which the new linguistic system of each African variety is being formed. This descriptive basis provided by EP is the first step to formulate any hypothesis regarding the motivation for the ongoing modifications.

Each construction with *SE* will be briefly described regarding the EP norm (and when possible different uses of this construction in the EP variety itself), and will be followed by a discussion of the occurrences of the AVP spoken corpus which show modifications to the construction[4]. The major change encountered, as the data will show, is related to the absence of the element *SE* in the constructions, and this is in fact a relatively frequent aspect in all five varieties as we will see below, even in the Portuguese variety of Cape Verde, which presents much fewer diverging properties in general than the others (Bacelar do Nascimento *et al.* 2008). Contexts in which the clitic is omitted are frequently ambiguous (which is understandable since *SE* triggers a certain interpretation, difficult to recover when it is absent) and can in fact be analysed as different constructions with *SE* in EP or different strategies (pronominal or not) in the AVP.

One important aspect which has to be raised previously to the discussion of the occurrences in spoken corpora of AVP is the fact that the absence of

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[4] An extensive collection of specific properties of AVP in spoken texts of the corpus Africa were undertaken in the scope of the project "Properties of the African Varieties compared with the European Portuguese" and is the basis for the study presented in this paper. A future development of this subject will require a full analysis of the written subpart of the corpus Africa. Although the written genre shows, in general, less properties which are specific of the AVP and is more conservative, nevertheless, a first and non systematic query over the written corpus of Guinea-Bissau shows evidence that the absence of *SE* in the Guinea-Bissau variety, in constructions where *SE* occurs in EP, is certainly not exclusive of the spoken genre. Intrinsically pronominal verbs like *sentar-se* 'to sit down', *referir-se* a 'to refer to', *dedicar-se* a 'to dedicate oneself to' occur frequently without *SE* in newspaper texts from the corpus (see example (i)). Namely, the verb *esforçar-se* 'to make an effort', exemplified in (ii), has 21 occurrences in the corpus, 14 of which with no clitic. In other constructions like the anticausative (also named inchoative) one, verbs also occur without clitic, as with the verb *preocupar* 'to worry', exemplified in (iii):
(i) "O antigo Presidente da ANP pretende agora descansar, na sua terra natal, em Bula onde irá *dedicar* o trabalho de cultivo da sua Quinta e pensar na sua vida privada." G (EP: irá dedicar-se)
'the former President of ANP wants now to rest, in his home land, in Bula where he will dedicate the farming work of his farm and think about his private life' (EP: will dedicate himself to the farming work)
(ii) "O novo Presidente da ANP garantiu, igualmente, que *esforçará* no sentido de consolidar a democracia, o respeito pelo direitos das Mulheres, das crianças e dos trabalhadores." G (EP: que se esforçará)
'the new President of ANP has guaranteed, also, that he will make an effort so as to consolidate the democracy, the respect for the rights of Women, children and workers' (EP: that he will CL make an effort)
(iii) "Curiosamente, os responsáveis do Ministério do Interior não *preocupam* com a recuperação dos documentos que se encontram no seu arquivo central." G (EP: não se preocupam)
'strangely, the responsible persons of the Ministry of Interior do not worry with the recovery of the documents which are in his central archive' (EP: do not CL worry)

the element *SE* in the following contexts can not be explained in terms of properties which are typical of spoken registers. Studies of spoken data show, especially in informal registers, a strong tendency to the omission of elements, the interruption of the discourse flow, and the resulting fragments and hesitations. These well known properties of spoken texts, especially informal ones, do not account for the omission of the element *SE* in spoken texts of African varieties, and the omission of *SE* is furthermore practically absent of spoken texts of standard varieties of EP. The only contexts where the spoken register seems to be a factor to take into consideration regarding the omission of *SE* are impersonal and passive constructions, which we will discuss below.

The cases where a clitic is added to a typically non pronominal syntactic structure in EP prove even more difficult for a linguistic analysis. We will review the contexts encountered in the corpus in section 3.

2.1 Reflexive constructions

In reflexive constructions such as in example (1) in Portuguese, the clitic pronoun is typically a direct (cf. (1a)) or indirect (cf. (1b)) object of the verb and is co-referent with the subject. This co-reference is indicated in (1) by the same index mark in the nominal phrase in the subject position (*O João*) and the clitic element (*se*)[5].

> (1) a. *O João*$_i$ lavou-*se*$_i$ de manhã antes de sair.
> 'João washed himself this morning before going out.'
> b. *A Maria*$_i$ ofereceu-*se*$_i$ uma prenda no seu dia de anos.
> 'Maria offered herself a gift on her birthday.'

The clitic occupies the same syntactic position as the nominal phrase *as crianças* in the example (2a) and as the prepositional phrase *às crianças* in the example (3a), which can be respectively pronominalized with an accusative pronoun (2b) or a dative pronoun (3b), confirming the direct object function of the pronoun *SE* in (1a), and its dative function in (1b), and the pronominal and argumental nature of *se* in (1).

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[5] In Portuguese, the clitic typically occurs immediately after the verbal predicate, after a hyphen. Certain constructions and elements attract the clitic pronoun to a pre-verbal position, like subordinate clauses (*O João disse que o encontrou ontem* 'João said that he found him yesterday', lit: João said that him found yesterday) and the negation adverb (*O João não se lavou* 'João didn't wash himself', lit: João not himself washed).

(2)   a.   *O João* lavou *as crianças* quando chegaram a casa.
           'João washed the children when they arrived home.'
      b.   O João lavou-*as* quando chegaram a casa.
           'João washed them when they arrived home.'

(3)   a.   *A Maria* ofereceu uma prenda *às crianças*.
           'Maria offered a gift to the children.'
      b.   A Maria ofereceu-*lhes* uma prenda.
           'Maria offered them a gift.'

As a direct (or indirect) object co-referent to the subject, the clitic can be 3rd p.sg. such as in (1), but also 1st or 2nd p.sg. or pl., according to the nominal or pronominal element in the subject position. An example using the 1st p.sg. clitic is given in (4):

(4)   Eu desenhei-*me* olhando para o espelho.
           'I drew myself by looking in the mirror.'

Absence of *SE* in the AVP

The clitic pronoun is omitted in very few occurrences of the corpus in reflexive constructions. Even without the presence of a pronoun marking the co-reference between subject and direct object, the structure is still understood as having a reflexive reading, as in (5), essentially due to the previous contexts leading the listener to presume that the speaker is also the Affected direct object.

(5)   a.   "Fui dar aulas. Uhm. Não, eh... *Inscrevi* num projecto de... de alfabetização." CV[6] (EP: inscrevi-*me* num projecto)
           'I started teaching. No, I applied [myself] to a literacy project.'
      b.   "mas quem vai lhe ajudar? ele vai *ajudar a si só*." GB (EP: ele vai ajudar-*se* a si próprio)
           'but who will help him? He will help himself.'

The absence of clitic is less to be expected in this construction since this ele-

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[6]   All the examples are extracted from the spoken corpus of each African variety of Portuguese. The variety is indicated: Angola (AN), Cape Verde (CV), Guinea-Bissau (GB), Mozambique (MO), S. Tome and Principe (ST).

ment pertains to the category pronoun and is functionally an argument of the verbal predicate.

2.2   *Intrinsically pronominal verbs*

Some verbal predicates occur only in the pronominal form, like *queixar-se* 'to complain' in (6). Other verbs can have more than one construction, one of them pronominal, and not related by any syntactic alternation. For example, the predicate *lembrar* can occur in a transitive construction (7a) or in a pronominal one (*lembrar-se*, in (7b)).

(6)   Todos *se queixavam* da comida do restaurante.
         They all CL complained about the food of the restaurant.
         'They all complained about the food of the restaurant.'

(7)   a. A Rita *lembrava* com frequência a sua viagem a Paris.
         'Rita frequently remembered her trip to Paris.'
      b. A Rita *lembrava-se* com frequência da sua viagem a Paris.
         Rita remembered-CL frequently of her trip to Paris.
         'Rita frequently remembered her trip to Paris.'

The clitic element in (6) and (7) has no nominal counterpart, contrary to (1)-(2) above, and does not fill a position of an argument with a syntactic function. It does not have a pronominal nature and is in fact part of the verb lemma *queixar-se* and *lembrar-se*. However, just like the personal clitic pronoun, it can vary in person and gender (1st, 2nd, 3rd p. singular or plural) according to the nominal element in subject position (see examples in (8)):

(8)   a. Eu queixava-me da comida.
         I complained-CL+1sg about the food.
         'I complained about the food.'
      b. Tu queixas-te da comida.
         You complain-CL+2sg about the food.
         'You complain about the food.'

Absence of *SE* in the AVP

The most frequent cases of absence of clitic are verbal predicates which are intrinsically pronominal in EP (103 cases in all AVP). Some of these verbs

occur as non pronominal in three or two AVP, namely: *referir-se (a)* 'to refer (to)', *esquecer-se* 'to forget', *lembrar-se* 'to remember', *assemelhar-se* 'to resemble', *comportar-se* 'to behave', *dedicar-se* 'to dedicate oneself', *esforçar-se* 'to make an effort', *formar-se* 'to get a degree', *levantar-se* 'to get up', *sentar-se* 'to sit down', *habituar-se* 'to get used to', *queixar-se* 'to complain'.

These predicates denote intellectual or cognitive experiences (e.g. *esquecer-se* 'to forget', *lembrar-se* 'to remember') and body movement (e.g. *levantar-se* 'to get up', *sentar-se* 'to sit down'). This is illustrated in (9) where the examples are followed by the standard European norm, i.e., the pronominal construction.

(9)   a. "até eu *lembro* uma vez... O doutor Mondlane... assistiu o nosso jogo..." MO (EP: até eu *me lembro* uma vez)
        'even I remember once… Doctor Mondlane…watched our game…' (EP: even I CL remember)
    b. "os pais (…) ficam com ideia só em ganhar dinheiro para dar os filhos de comer e *esquecem* da responsabilidade moral." GB (EP: *esquecem-se* da responsabilidade)
        'parents (…) think only about earning money to give their children something to eat and they forget their moral responsibility.' (EP: they forget-CL)
    c. "fomos ao mato, eu *levantei* e tal" ST (EP: eu *levantei-me*)
        'we went to the bush, I got up and so on' (EP: I got up-CL)

The verb *lembrar* 'remember', in (9a), or *esquecer* 'forget' are, however, possible in EP as non-pronominal, at least for certain speakers, in similar constructions (*lembrar / esquecer o nome de uma pessoa* 'to remember / forget someone's name). The contexts in the AVP are contrasted with the European norm but it is important to see if non-normative occurrences in EP are also encountered, in order to assess whether we may possibly be facing a general trend of the Portuguese language in its varieties.

It is important to note that the absence of clitic is not an established pattern in the AVP. It does occur with high frequency, but the same lexical item is used in some contexts as pronominal and in others as non pronominal, even by the same speaker and with both occurring in close range. This is the case of (10) where the speaker first uses the verb *aproximar* 'to approach' as non pronominal, contrary to the EP norm (*aproximar-se*), and immediately

after as pronominal (*tenha aproximado-se*). We focus only on the use of the pronominal construction and abstract from other linguistic characteristics which diverge from the EP norm in the discussion of the examples presented, like in the second occurrence of *aproximar* in (10) below, where a relative construction would be required and the clitic should precede the verb.[7]

(10)   "tivemos casos de tubarões que ten[...] que os nossos homens não *aproximam* muito à praia. já tivemos um único caso de tubarão *tenha aproximado-se* da praia" ST (EP: os nossos homens não se aproximam muito da praia)

'we've had cases of sharks that [...] that our men do not approach the beach much. we had a single case of shark had approached-CL the beach'

2.3.   *Causative / anticausative alternation*

Transitive constructions with a subject Agent or Cause (example (11)) can in many cases enter a syntactic alternation, the anticausative construction[8], where the direct object of the transitive will occur in the subject position and the Agent will be obligatorily ruled out (see (12a)), while the Cause can be a prepositional complement (e.g., *com o vento* 'with the wind' in (12b)):

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7   A specific verb raises the issue of whether we are facing the same verbal predicate with the same meaning of the EP verb, or whether the verb is used with a new meaning. It is the case of *sentar* 'to sit', pronominal in EP, and used in contexts where it seems to refer not only to sitting down but also to a gathering of people to discuss a certain issue, such as in the examples below, where contexts from two different AVP are presented. The polysemy of the verb does not appear to be related to the use of a pronominal construction, since the meaning of meeting someone can be used with or without clitic, even by the same speaker, in the same utterance (see (ii)). The non pronominal use of *sentar* is acceptable in certain contexts in EP.
(i) "então, é lógico, que efectivamente (...) os jornalistas possam sentar, não é, e, realmente, eh, ter ideias comuns" AN (EP: possam sentar-se) 'then it is logical that effectively the journalists can sit down, isn't it, and, truly, have common ideas'
(ii) "quando consegui isso sentei-me com a minha família ou seja com os meus avós cresci nas mãos dos meus avós e assim foi possível sentar com eles" MO (EP: foi possível sentar-me com eles) 'when I managed that I sat down-CL with my family, that is, with my grandparents I grew up in the care of my grandparents and that's how it was possible to sit down with them'.

8   The anticausative construction (e.g., Zubizarreta 1985, 1992) is referred to by other authors as: pronominal construction with ergative *SE* (Mateus *et al.* 2004); neutral pronominal construction (Ruwet 1972); inchoative construction (Belletti & Rizzi 1988); non causative construction (Pesetsky 1990); middle pronominal construction (Bouchard 1995). The term *middle voice* refers to different structures according to authors and theoretical backgrounds: in languages with no overt middle morphology like Portuguese, it usually restricts itself to the construction *Este tecido lava bem* 'This tissue washes well'), but can also refer to what we here call anticausative constructions, i.e., cases of syntactic alternation; in certain broad approaches to the middle concept, it refers to a large set of predicates where the entity in the subject position is involved in bringing about the event and simultaneously is affected by the event, like predicates of emotive speech (*complain*), complex cognitive predicates (*remember*), predicates of change in bodily posture (*stand up*) (see Kemmer 1993).

(11)   O rapaz / o vento abriu a janela.
         'The boy / the wind opened the window.'

(12) a. *A janela abriu-se pelo rapaz.
          the window opened-itself by the boy.
      b. A janela abriu-se com o vento.
          The window opened-itself with the wind.

In the anticausative construction, the clitic shows agreement regarding the syntactic subject, varying in person and number:

(13) a. O barulho assustou-me.
          'The noise frightened me.'
      b. Eu assustei-me com o barulho.
          I frightened-CL+1sg with the noise.
          'I was frightened by the noise.'

Note that the anticausative construction does not always require the presence of the marker *SE* in EP, like in the cases of *o cozinheiro derreteu a manteiga* 'the cook melted the butter'/ a *manteiga derreteu* 'the butter melted', and the presence of the element *SE* is lexically determined by the verb (although some semantic verb classes favour an anticausative construction with *SE*, like psychological verbs (e.g. *preocupar-se* 'to worry', *divertir-se* 'to have fun', etc.).

Absence of *SE* in the AVP

There are only three occurrences in the corpora of absence of clitic in anticausative constructions. This number will need to be compared with the frequency of this construction in the corpus, but it is nevertheless much lower than the loss of clitic in cases of intrinsically pronominal predicates. Two examples are given in (14), with the predicate *alterar* 'to change', where the alternation causative / anticausative would be expressed in EP as *Eles alteraram o programa* 'They changed the programme' / *O programa alterou-se* 'the programme changed-CL'.

(14) a. "deixei de estudar porque, (...) depois de passar de classe, da décima classe, começaram a complicar, *o programa alterou*" AN
          (EP: o programa alterou-*se*)
          'I quit studying because after finishing the tenth grade, [they] started complicating, the programme changed'

The verb *preocupar* is yet another case where variation between a pronominal and a non pronominal construction occurs in the corpus Africa, as shown by the contrast between (15a) and (15b):

(15) a. "agora se nós não estamos a *preocupar* com ver as coisas, com ajudar a população" GB (EP: não estamos a preocupar-*nos*)
'but if we are not concerned with seeing things, helping the population'

  b. "há pais ainda *se preocupa*, há outros não. pronto deu dinheiro, olha você que, que compre, que arranje, que vai arranjar. e nós *preocupamos* com isso tudo. é trabalho, é doença de criança, é com pai, também que nós temos que *preocupar*" ST (EP: preocupamo-*nos* com isso tudo; nós temos que *nos* preocupar)
'there are parents who still worry(+CL), others don't. He gave money, then you buy, you get [things] and we worry about all that. it's about work, it's about children illness, it's about the father, also that we have to worry'

The case of anticausative constructions was previously studied in Gonçalves (1990) for the Portuguese variety spoken in Mozambique. Based on corpus and elicitation data from native speakers, the author points two possible explanations regarding the changes observed in the data. The first would be based on the influence of the native bantu languages: those languages have different verbal affixes which lead to a causative reading, but no similar system to the European element *SE* is available. This absence of a similar strategy in the native languages of the Mozambican speakers of Portuguese as L2 and the fact that the requirement or absence of *SE,* or even its optionality is not regular, depending instead on the lexical properties of the verbs would make it difficult for them to uncover the rules for the formation of the anticausative construction. The second would point to the instability in the presence of *SE* in the anticausative as an ongoing evolution of Portuguese, and its optionality an indication of its future omission (Gonçalves 1990: 242). The reasons for the change in the Mozambique variety would then be the mixed result of two aspects: an internal change affecting Portuguese, consequently more visible in varieties where the norm is less enforced, and the difficulty for speakers of Portuguese as second language to incorporate a non-existing strategy in their native languages, more even so when this strategy is not syntacti-

cally regulated, but is rather due to "lexical idiosyncrasies" (Burzio 1986: 38, apud Gonçalves 1990: 272)

However, no cases of absence of *SE* were encountered in anticausative constructions in the Mozambique subcorpus, there was one occurrence from the Angola corpus and two from Guinea-Bissau. Guinea-Bissau is not however a country with native Bantu languages, so that the explanation based on the influence of languages from this family seems less probable, while the possibility of an internal shift specific to Portuguese gets more strength (the discussion of whether the facts under analysis are the results of languages in contact or of an internal shift is a long and difficult issue, so that a contrastive approach to the different linguistic spaces where Portuguese is undergoing its own evolution is crucial).

Insertion of *SE* in the AVP

The presence of a clitic in the anticausative construction with the verb *desanimar* 'to discourage, to loose heart' is an interesting case. This psychological verb, i.e., a verb expressing emotion or sentiment experienced by an entity in the subject or object position, differs in EP from the prototypical properties of this verb class since its anticausative construction is non pronominal (frequently called inchoative construction, see footnote 5). This contrast is illustrated, in (16), between *desanimar* and a more prototypical psychological verb like *preocupar* 'to worry': the (a) sentence is a case of causative structure with either verb, the (b) sentence is an anticausative pronominal alternation with *preocupar* and (c) an inchoative alternation (non pronominal) with *desanimar*:

(16) a. Os maus resultados escolares do filho *preocupam / desanimam* o pai.
'The son's bad school results worry / discourage the father.'
b. O pai *preocupa-se* com os maus resultados escolares do filho.
'The father worries about the son's bad school results.'
c. O pai *desanima* com os maus resultados escolares do filho.
'The father gets discouraged about his son's bad school results.'

The verb desanimar is one of five verbal psychological predicates[9] with a non

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9   The other four verbs are *enraivecer* 'to enrage', *entristecer* 'to sadden', *desalentar* ', *desesperar* 'to discourage' and *desassossegar* 'to unsettle'.

pronominal anticausative construction, disrupting a regular pattern of verbs denoting emotions in Portuguese. This pattern is so regular that a study of polysemy has shown that polysemous verbs acquiring a psychological meaning conform in many cases to this pattern unless the expression of an emotion is less used than the other meanings and unless the verb is strongly agentive (Mendes 2004).

That *desanimar* occurs in an anticausative pronominal alternation in the Guinea-Bissau corpus (17) is certainly not a case of added noise at the lexicon level, but rather a case of integrating an item to a productive syntactico-semantic pattern.

(17)　　"uma pessoa chega ao hopital e *desanima-se* logo" GB (EP: uma pessoa *desanima* logo)

a person arrives at the hospital and discourages-himself immediately

'a person arrives at the hospital and becomes immediately discouraged'

However, this occurrence has to be related with other contexts where *SE* is inserted in verbal predicates, which will be discussed in section 3.

2.4　　Impersonal reading and passive reading of SE

Impersonal reading

In contexts like (18), the clitic occurs in an impersonal structure where the internal argument of the verb is lexicalized as the direct object. While this is a possible construction in Portuguese, a null-subject language, the equivalent in other languages requires a lexical item of unspecified reference in subject position, like *on* in French (19).

(18)　a.　Vendeu-*se* muitas casas naquele bairro.[10]

sold-CL many houses in that neighbourhood.

'They / Someone sold many houses in that neighbourhood.'

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[10] This construction is traditionally described as less normative than the construction with passive *SE* where the nominal phrase is the subject and the verb and the subject agree in number (*Venderam-se muitas casas naquele bairro* 'Many houses were sold in that neighbourhood'), although recent descriptions and grammars consider it grammatical (cf. Mateus *et al.*, 2004).

    b. Diz-*se* que o preço da gasolina vai subir.
       says-CL that the price of petrol is going up.
       'It is said that the price of petrol is going up.'

(19)   *On* a vendu beaucoup de maisons dans ce quartier.
         'They / Someone sold many houses in that neighbourhood.'

In impersonal constructions with *SE*, the direct object can be either a nominal phrase (18a) or a that-clause (18b) and no subject is present[11] (**O Rui diz-se que vendeu muitas casas* 'Rui said-CL that he sold many houses)[12] although it is implicit since an agentive adverb can occur (*Vende-se propositadamente casas baratas naquele bairro* 'They purposefully sell inexpensive houses in that neighbourhood'). The clitic only occurs as the 3rd p.sg. word form *SE*, contrary to the previous constructions. This means that in example (20), where the 3rd p.sg clitic *se* is replaced by the 1st p.sg. clitic *me*, the verb has to be interpreted as an imperative and the clitic as an accusative pronoun, a totally different construction from the one in (18):

(20)   Vende-*me* casas baratas naquele bairro.
         'Sell me inexpensive houses in that neighbourhood.'

Passive reading of *SE*

Another construction with clitic, exemplified in (21), shares a common feature with the anticausative construction referred to above, namely the fact that it involves a realignment of the verb arguments where the direct object of the transitive construction is lexicalized in the subject position[13]. In fact, in (21) the nominal phrase *estas casas* 'these houses' is a plural nominal and triggers plural agreement with the verb, contrary to example (18a) above.

(21)   Estas casas venderam-se ontem.
         These houses sold+pl-CL yesterday.
         'These houses were sold yesterday.'

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[11] In the generative literature, this effect is said to be the result of the attribution to the clitic of the Nominative case by the category FLEX and the association to the clitic of thematic information on the external argument.
[12] This sentence is possible, with specific intonation, when the first nominal is in fact the topic of the remaining sentence.
[13] For a different approach, see Martins (2003).

The interpretation of (21) is close to the passive construction and the clitic has a similar function to the passive morphology in syntactic passive structures. As in the anticausative construction, an agentive argument is implicit (*Estas casas venderam-se propositadamente* 'These houses were sold on purpose'). When the nominal phrase in the subject position is singular (22a), the construction is in fact ambiguous between an impersonal construction (cf. English gloss in (22b)) and a passive construction (see English gloss in (22c)):

(22) a. Vendeu-se ontem uma casa antiga naquela rua.
          sold-CL yesterday an old house in that street.
          '[Someone] sold an old house in that street yesterday.'
          'An old house was sold in that street yesterday.'

Absence of *SE* in the AVP

The example (23) is naturally used in EP as an impersonal construction with *SE*, and the expression *como se costuma dizer* 'as is commonly said' is somewhat lexicalized.

(23)   "quem tivesse idade para ir à soirée, como *costuma dizer*" GB
          'the ones who were old enough to go to the soirée, as is commonly said'

It is not always possible to establish whether the context is impersonal or rather passive (this ambiguity already exists in passive and impersonal pronominal constructions in EP, as in example (22)). We have decided to count ambiguous contexts as cases of impersonal constructions: the absence of *SE*, which is the passive marker, favours an impersonal construction as in (24). This context could be expressed in EP either as an impersonal construction with no available subject in the context (*devia realmente fazer-se um esforço* '[someone] should really make an effort') or a construction with passive reading of the clitic (*devia realmente fazer-se um esforço* 'an effort should really be made').

(24)   "na ausência de materiais escolares, ou equipamentos escolares, devia realmente *fazer* um esforço nesse sentido, de, eh, aumentar os materiais e os equipamentos escolares." GB
          'in the absence of school supplies, or school equipment, [one] should really make an effort to improve school supplies and equipment.'

The loss of the clitic pronoun might imply a lower frequency of contexts with an overt passive construction, since the clitic is directly involved in the passive properties of the construction. A detailed analysis of all occurrences of the clitic *SE* is required to evaluate whether pronominal passive constructions are in fact used and if the non pronominal constructions still have a passive reading even though *SE* is missing.

Certain contexts would certainly have to be used in EP with the element *SE* in the construction. However, in other cases, although a construction with *SE* may be used in EP, it is possible to interpret the context as non pronominal and, indeed, as a case where there is no overt subject but an antecedent can be recovered in the context.

(25) "passado alguns anos (...) ah, muitas escolas foram abertas, já em sessenta e oito houve um... surto de sa[...], de escolas, que foram abertas, e assim, *proporcionava* às pessoas, não é, estudarem" CV

'after some years, many schools were opened, already in seventy eight there were many cases of schools that were opened and so [it] allowed people to study'

Example (25) could be expressed in EP with an impersonal construction with *SE* (*proporcionava-se às pessoas estudarem*), but (25) can also be analysed as transitive with a subject reconstructed from the previous context (*[a abertura de escolas] proporcionava às pessoas estudarem* '[the schools opening] allowed people to study').

In many cases the speaker uses, as in (26), several strategies in his discourse for expressing an underspecified agent, like impersonal constructions with *SE* (in bold) and null-subject constructions (underlined), mixed with a 1st p.sg. (italic):

(26) "açucarinha, como é que **se faz**? eu vou dizer como é que **se faz** açucarinha: açucarinha, <u>pega</u> ao coco, <u>quebra</u> no meio, **lava-se**, muito bem lavado, depois 'larra', <u>põe</u> numa panela limpa com um pouco de água e casca de limão, com u[...], uma colherinhazinha de manteiga, depois... <u>deixa ferver</u> muito bem fervido até cozer o coco. depois *ponho* açúcar, *ponho* açúcar, <u>deixa cozer</u> até secar, depois de ter, ficar um pouco, quase a secar, <u>põe</u>, **arranja**, **corta-se** folha de banana, banana-pão ou prata, depois **limpa-se**

muito bem limpado, depois **espalha-se** açucarinha. <u>deixa secar</u>, depois de <u>ter apanhado</u> a açucarinha, <u>deixa secar</u>; depois está a açucarinha. moda de São Tomé." ST

'açucarinha, how do you make it? I'm going to say how açucarinha is made: açucarinha, take the coconut, break it in half, it is washed, very well washed, then 'larra', put in a clean pan with a little bit of water and lemon peel, with a small spoon of butter, then let it boil very well boiled until the coconut is cooked. then I put sugar, I put sugar, let boil until it dries, after it is almost dry, put, arrange, a banana leaf is cut, banana-pão or prata, then it is cleaned very well cleaned, then the açucarinha is spread. let dry, after [you] have caught the açucarinha, let dry. then you have açucarinha, like it is done in Sao Tome.'

The strategies outlined in the text above are all perfectly acceptable, whether the speaker describes her own action (1ˢᵗ p.sg. subject) or gives indications to the listener or some underspecified entity as a virtual listener (impersonal construction with *SE*; null-subject denoting the interlocutor). The question raised by the context in (26) is not one of the use of a different strategy compared to EP standards but rather one of textual cohesion. The use of different constructions in the discourse does not appear acceptable to EP speakers, who tend to favour the adoption of a single strategy.

Uses of *SE* with undetermined subjects

The previous data had shown great variation regarding the expression of undetermined subjects, such as in the case of the examples in section 3.2. The insertion of the clitic seems to be frequently related to some difficulty in this type of constructions, illustrated by example (27):

(27)   "cá na Guiné-Bissau comparado com outros países, *dizem-se* que a sida é, é uma, é, está em menor escala." GB (EP: *dizem / diz-se*)

'here in Guinea-Bissau compared to other countries, they say / it is said that AIDS is on a smaller scale.'

In (27), two constructions are used simultaneously for expressing an undetermined subject, with ungrammatical results according to standard EP. The

first one is a null subject 3rd p. pl. ([eles] *dizem que* 'they say that) and the second an impersonal construction with clitic *SE* (*diz-se que* 'it is said that' lit: said-CL that). Both constructions are in accordance with the grammar of EP, but used together they produce an ungrammatical sentence in EP due to the fact that the clitic *SE* blocks the possibility of occurrence of the subject[14].

In another context, presented in (28), there is repetition of the same strategy, the element *SE* is duplicated in two different positions (*que se pretende assimilar-se* 'that CL wants to assimilate-CL).

(28) "nos primeiros anos, o indivíduo fica, ficar no meio do, do da, da língua que *se pretende* mais tarde *assimilar-se*" AN (EP: *que se pretende assimilar*)
'in the first years, the individual stays in the middle of the language that one later wants to assimilate himself'

3. Cases of insertion of *SE*

The corpus of the five AVP also present occurrences where *SE* is added to a verbal predicate in constructions where it would not be realized in EP. Some cases have already been discussed in the previous sections on specific constructions with *SE*. However, a high number of contexts do not find explanation based on these constructions. The clitic can occur with intransitive verbs like *triunfar* 'to triumph' (29a) *vir* 'to come' (29c), *chegar* 'to arrive', *viver* 'to live', and transitive verbs with a prepositional object like *contribuir para* 'to contribute to' (29b) or *lidar com* 'to engage in a relationship with' (29d).

(29) a. "e qual é a sua maior aspiração depois de ter conseguido ultra-passar com muitas dificuldades ao, ah, de *ter-se triunfado* na vi-da, digamos assim (…)?" AN (EP: *ter triunfado*)
'and what is your biggest ambition after being able to overcome so many difficulties, after having triumphed in life, let's put it this way?'
    b. "tudo isso *contribuiu-se* para" GB (EP: *contribuiu* para)
'all this contributed to'

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14 See footnote 7.

   c. "então,(...) do pó *te viestes* e do pó *te tornas*. o próprio Deus es-
creveu que o homem tem que trabalhar" CV (EP: do pó *vieste* e
ao pó *tornas*)
'then, from the dust you came and to the dust you return. God
himself wrote that man has to work'

This aspect has already been mentionned in Gonçalves (1990) for the variety
of Mozambique where she points out some regularities in the insertion of *SE*
which occur with predicates denoting a cognitive, emotional or physical
experience. The insertion of *SE* would be related to a middle-reflexive inter-
pretation by the speakers, where the subject of the sentence is both an agent
and an affected entity. This matches many of the cases extracted from the
corpus Africa and the middle interpretation is certainly important for under-
standing the data. According to this author, this insertion of *SE* with a mid-
dle interpretation would be the result of the influence of the native bantu
languages on Portuguese since, in the bantu languages, the reflexive is gram-
maticalized as a verbal prefix. When looking at the number of occurrences
found in each variety (see Table 2 in next section), it is clear that the insertion
of *SE* in these "middle-reflexive" uses of the verb are not restricted to Angola
and Mozambique, where Bantu languages are spoken, but are as frequent,
and in some cases more, in countries without Bantu languages and where cre-
ole languages have emerged, like Guinea-Bissau. In fact, both the cases of
absence of *SE* and insertion of *SE* are found in the five varieties and we will
discuss this aspect in more detail in next section.

    An important fact is that European Portuguese, in its dialectal varieties of
Madera and Porto Santo (and less significatively in dialects of the Azores and
the center-south of Continental Portugal), presents contexts where the inser-
tion of *SE* is also found in similar contexts, as presented in Martins (2003), a
construction which she describes as a "double object" construction where
there is agreement between the verb and a subject constituant which shares
the subject function with the element *SE*. The examples given below are
taken from Martins (2003):

  (30) a. Oh, era um pano que a gente **se punha** [na caixa do moinho].
(Tanque, Porto Santo. CORDIAL-SIN, PST 23)
      b. A gente não **se come**, mas os de Lisboa diz que comem daquele
peixe. (Câmara de Lobos, Madeira. CORDIAL-SIN, CLC 25)

    c. A gente **via-se** elas [as baleias] longe, era o esparto. (Caniçal, Madeira. CORDIAL-SIN, CLC 32)

    d. Não sabem o que a gente **se passámos** aí. (Câmara de Lobos, Madeira. CORDIAL-SIN, CLC 15)

In these examples, the transitive or intransitive verb keeps its argument structure and the element *SE* is added to the construction, with similar results to the examples given above for the AVP. So, although it is not a feature of the standard EP system, its possibility in both dialectal and national varieties of Portuguese could indicate a more general tendency of the Portuguese language.

4.   Overview of diverging properties in constructions with *SE*

The preceding sections have identified several aspects in pronominal constructions in EP where AVP show diverging contexts, either by omitting the clitic element or by adding one. We have described these contexts taking into consideration, on the one hand, the standard construction which would be used in EP and, on the other, the patterns which may be emerging in the AVP.

An overview of the frequency of these contexts is presented in Table 2. For each variety two main aspects are considered: cases of absence of *SE* and cases of added clitic, further divided into different constructions: intrinsically pronominal verbs; reflexive and reciprocal; impersonal and passives, counted as a single category due to the frequent difficulty in resolving the ambiguity; and anticausatives.

Table 2: Total occurrences of constructions with SE showing different properties from EP

Absence of SE	AN	CV	GB	MO	ST	Total
Intrinsically pronominal verbs	10	14	25	19	35	103
Reflexive	0	1	3	0	0	5
Impersonal (impersonal / passive)	1	4	3	4	6	18
Anticausative	1	0	2	0	0	3
Total	12	19	33	24	41	129

Table 2: Total occurrences of constructions with SE showing different properties from EP

Insertion of *SE*	AN	CV	GB	MO	ST	Total
Middle-Reflexive	3	2	7	7	3	
Reciprocal				2		
Impersonal (impersonal / passive)	1		1	1		
Anticausative		1	1			
Total	4	3	9	10	3	29

Firstly, this work started from the observation of frequent loss of clitic in AVP, but this had to be revised when the analysis of corpus data also showed cases of clitic insertion. This raised the issue of whether there was any pattern revealing itself. Figures are certainly crucial for our analysis: the total number of cases of absence of clitic is 129, while the total number of cases where the clitic is inserted is 29. Frequency uncovers the emerging pattern in AVP, namely the pattern of clitic omission. We will get back to possible reasons for the occurrence of clitic insertion.

Frequency differs considerably between varieties, with S. Tome and Principe (41) and Guinea-Bissau (33) showing the highest number of contexts where the clitic element is not used. This is in perfect accord to other contrastive studies elaborated based on these corpora (Bacelar do Nascimento *et al.* 2008), where Portuguese spoken in these two countries was clearly presenting more diverging properties in regard to EP. However, the number of contexts of the Cape Verde variety is surprisingly higher than that of Angola. Indeed, in most of our previous lexical and syntactic analyses, the Cape Verde variety was following the European norm more closely. These conclusions, however, need to be revised when larger corpora become available[15].

Table 2 also shows that the absence of clitic is occurring essentially in cases of intrinsically pronominal verbs, including what is sometimes referred to as middle constructions (freq. 103), and also in cases of impersonal constructions (freq. 18). These figures do not include occurrences which could be interpreted as cases of constructions with null arbitrary subjects, with unspecified reference, as in example (29) or occurrences where the larger context might provide an antecedent for the null subject (e.g. (28)), a very common

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[15] The compilation of a spoken corpus of S. Tome and Principe has already taken place, new recordings in Cape Verde are planned and some recordings in Angola enabled us to enlarge the corpus.

aspect in spoken language. When taking into account other contexts in the corpus, we can certainly identify some oscillation in the use of impersonal constructions in the AVP, namely in constructions with an impersonal *SE* (*vende-se casas* 'houses are sold'), with a null 3rd p.pl. subject (*vendem casas* '[they] sell houses), in cases where a double strategy is used (e.g. (30)) or in cases where the pronoun is redoubled (e.g. (31)). The insertion of clitic also point to some regularities concerning the semantic type of the verbal predicates and relates to dialectal data collected mainly in Madera and Porto Santo.

In Gonçalves (1996), the author proposes that non argumental clitic *SE* has a tendency to be omitted, in opposition to clitics pertaining to the category pronoun and having an argument function. This would lead us to expect the same behaviour of the clitic in all the types of construction referred to in Table 2, with the exception of the reflexive and reciprocal constructions. The frequency levels presented above do show a much higher number of contexts in cases of non argumental clitic, but clitic omission in reflexive constructions is still slightly more frequent, however, than in anticausative ones. This could be the result of new emerging patterns for the use of *SE*[16].

The observations on the Portuguese variety of Mozambique recorded by Perpétua Gonçalves (Gonçalves 1996) mentioned, among other diverging aspects, the tendency towards the omission of *SE*, as well as its insertion in other contexts. Our study has shown that this is a general property of the five AVP, in the comparable corpora analysed, and that other varieties show even a higher number of contexts with absence of *SE* than the Mozambican one. In fact, a contrastive study of EP and AVP together with Brazilian Portuguese (BP) is our next objective, since there is evidence of the same pattern (occurrence of the verb *suicidar-se* 'to commit suicide' as *suicidar* in BP (Mateus *et al.* 2004)). The contrastive study of the five AVP raises the issue of whether a possible explanation for the changes in the uses of *SE* can be related to the influence of the Bantu languages. A future contrastive study of standard spoken EP, dialectal EP and BP will contribute to establish the possibility of internal shift, at least for some of the patterns uncovered.

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[16] An approach to be followed is to look at these constructions under the broad approach of the middle voice (see footnote 8; Kemmer 1993) which would include the main pronominal constructions mentioned.

5.   Final remarks

A follow-up of this study of pronominal constructions in Portuguese requires a contrastive approach which includes the Brazilian variety. It could contribute to establishing whether pronominal constructions are in any way influenced by local languages and local Creoles or if it is the case of a linguistic change resulting from factors internal to Portuguese. To pursue this approach, we believe that it is crucial to compare this data with spoken and dialectal corpora of European Portuguese, two language resources available at CLUL. Another interesting development would be to cross reference these results with studies of other Romance languages spoken in Africa, like French, and to observe if the loss of the clitic is in any way occurring also in French varieties.

Most of the properties where the African varieties of Portuguese differ from the European norm are still emerging and show strong variation. The compilation of more resources and their analysis over time will make it possible to record more stable trends of language change across the varieties and inside each variety.

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