

TO SEE AS A MARKER OF CONTEXTUAL SALIENCE IN ROMANCE LANGUAGES: EVIDENCE FROM ACADIAN FRENCH AND BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE

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- **ABSTRACT:** This paper discusses constructions found in Brazilian Portuguese (BP) and Acadian French (AF), in which the equivalents of *to see* accompanies a second verb in imperative utterances. In these constructions in BP and AF *to see* emphasizes the command expressed by the other verb. The BP construction can also have an additional interpretation, in which *vê* ‘see_{IMPERATIVE,2,SINGULAR}’¹ has the meaning ‘to verify’. It is proposed that BP constructions can be associated with two different structures. The constructions with the ‘to verify’ meaning are treated as biclausal structures in which the verb *ver* ‘to see’ selects for a CP headed by the complementizer *se* ‘if’. As for the analysis of the emphatic order meaning associated to the BP and AF constructions, we adopt the proposals put forth in Speas & Tenny (2003) and Hill (2007, 2014) according to which conversational pragmatics is encoded in syntax as a predicative structure (Speech Act Projection - SAP) above CP. Following these ideas, we analyze BP and AF emphatic order constructions as monoclausal structures, where *vê* in BP and *voir* in AF are injunctive pragmatic markers that are externally merged into the SA head in order to encode a pragmatic relation.
- **KEYWORDS:** pragmatic marker; perception verbs; romance languages; grammaticalization; semantic bleaching.

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¹ The following abbreviations are used hereafter in this paper: 1=1st person; 2=2nd person; 3=3rd person; expl=expletive; FUT=future; GER=gerund; IMP=imperative; IMP_{SURROGATE}=surrogate imperative; IMP_{TRUE}=true imperative; INF=infinitive; PART=participle; PRES.IND=present of the indicative mood; PSTIMP=past imperfect; PSTPERF=past perfect; sg=singular; pl=plural; SPPST=simple past; SUBJ=subjunctive mood.

Introduction

It is well known that perception verbs such as *to see* can select a wide array of tensed and infinitival complements that are associated to different types of semantic categories (events, propositions, etc.) and that these verbs have different readings (direct, indirect, imaginative), depending on the type of complement they occur with. For instance, whereas the presence of a finite clause induces what is known as an “indirect” interpretation of the perception verb (1), the presence of a non-finite complement induces a “direct” reading (2)² (AKMAJIAN, 1977; GUAISTI, 1993; LABELLE, 1996; BOIVIN, 1998; FELSER, 1999; MILLER; LOWREY, 2003, among others). These verbs also allow an imaginative reading (3), that is, a perception that takes place in the perceiver’s imagination (OLSSON, 1976; BOIVIN, 1998; WILLEMS; DEFRANCQ, 2000; RODRIGUES, 2006).

- (1) a. *J’ai vu (à son allure) que Jean était ivre.* (indirect reading)
b. *Eu vi (pelo seu jeito) que Jean estava bêbado.*
‘I saw (by the way he was) that Jean drank.’
- (2) a. *J’ai vu (*à son allure) Jean boire/buvant.* (direct reading)
b. *Eu vi (*pelo seu jeito) Jean beber/bebendo.*
‘I saw (*by the way he was) John drink/drinking.’
- (3) a. *Je vois Jean boire.* (imaginative reading)
b. *Eu vejo Jean bebendo.*
‘I see Jean drinking.’

However, in some Romance languages, the counterparts of *to see* have other meanings and uses that are not as extensively studied. For instance, in Acadian French (AF) informal speech and in Brazilian Portuguese (BP), equivalents of *to see* can appear in injunctive utterances in which they do not convey direct, indirect nor imaginative reading. In these utterances, they seem to emphasize (in some readings) the command expressed by the main verb, as in (4) and (5).

- (4) *Écoute voir!*
listen-2sg-IMP see-INF
‘Listen!’
- (5) *Vê se me escuta!*
see-2sg-IMP if me listen-2sg-PRES.IND³
‘Listen to me!’ or ‘See if you can hear me!’

² The labels *direct* and *indirect* are related to the experiencer’s contact with the perceived event. Indirect perception is generally a result of an inferential activity based on evidence related to the described situation (in (1), the way Jean was mumbling his words, for instance). Direct perception, on the contrary, cannot be based on the perception of this evidence (2).

³ The form *escuta* is in the indicative present, second person singular; it is not the true imperative form of *escutar* ‘to listen’. The sentence in (i), in which the verb form is plural, confirms this analysis:

In AF, as in other French varieties, infinitival *voir* (lit.: ‘to see’) can co-occur with imperative verbs, as in (4); however, in these types of utterances, *voir* does not have the morphosyntactic and semantic properties of the perception verb from which it seems to be derived (see section “Acadian French *voir*”). It will be argued that this use of *voir* has an emphatic function: it reinforces the imperative value by stating to the hearer that the linguistic or extralinguistic context is such that it requires them to undertake the action denoted by the imperative.

The BP construction in (5) can have the same reading as that in (4) for AF: it can be understood as an emphatic order that takes into account salient information from the linguistic or extralinguistic context. However, this construction can have another interpretation, in which *ver* ‘to see’ has the meaning ‘to verify’. Thus, (5) is ambiguous and could be uttered in two different contexts, for instance:

(i) in a context where the speaker says “you never listen to me, you never pay attention to my words, but in the end I’m always right” (an emphatic order);

(ii) in a context where the speaker says “the phone call quality is bad; let’s do a test to see if you can hear me”. Hence both readings convey an order, but the former transmits an emphatic order, that requires the hearer to undertake the action denoted by the second verb in the sentence, whereas the latter transmits an order or a request that demands a verification act; the verification meaning is conveyed by the verb *ver* ‘to see’.

The main goal of this paper is to examine the properties of AF and BP constructions under the emphatic order reading, which can be accounted for by conversational pragmatics. To do so, it will first be necessary to differentiate the two meanings of the BP construction given in (5). We will propose that the BP construction in (5) can be associated with two different structures. The construction with the ‘to verify’ meaning is a biclausal structure in which the verb *ver* ‘to see’ selects for a CP headed by the complementizer *se* ‘if’, as in (6):

(6) $[_{VP} DP [_{V'} v [_{VP} ver [_{CP} se [_{TP} \dots$

As for the analysis of the emphatic order meaning associated to (5) and also to the AF construction in (4), we adopt the proposals put forth in Speas and Tenny (2003) and Hill (2007, 2014) according to which conversational pragmatics is encoded in syntax as a predicative structure (Speech Act Projection - SAP) above CP. Following these ideas, we analyze AF and BP emphatic order constructions as monoclausal structures, where *voir* and *vê* are injunctive pragmatic markers that encode a direct address and these markers are externally merged into the SA head in order to encode a pragmatic relation.

The paper is organized as follows. The next section presents some background notions that are used in this paper. The third section discusses AF data, examining the morphosyntactic and semantic properties of *voir* as well as its distribution. The fourth

(i) *Vê se vocês me escutam desta vez!*
see-2sg-IMP if you me listen-2pl-PRES.IND

section examines BP data and discusses the differences between the two readings for the construction in (5)⁴. Then, in the fifth section, we offer a comparison between AF and BF constructions. The sixth section presents the theoretical framework in which the analysis is couched and in the seventh section we put forward our proposal; the eighth section presents our final remarks.

Background notions

In this section, we briefly present some key concepts we use to characterize AF and BP utterances examined in this paper. These utterances can be subsumed under the group of directive speech acts⁵, whose illocutionary purpose is “an attempt to get the hearer to do something” (SEARLE, 1975, p. 158) or to act in a certain way. Directives involve mainly orders and commands, but more moderate directives can be requests, instructions or suggestions.

Generally, it is the imperative that is used in directive speech acts, but other types of sentences can also fulfill that function. It is also to be noted that imperative sentences can be non-directive (KISSINE, 2013; JARY; KISSINE, 2016). Accordingly, even if BP sentences that express an emphatic order are in the indicative mood, we will analyze them as directive speech acts.

In discussing the meaning of imperatives, Aikhenvald (2010, p. 203) argues that directive meanings “correlate with a general feature of the strength or degree of a command” and that “emphasis in imperatives is often linked to the strength of command – the more insistent the commander, the more emphasis they put on the command”. The author explains that an imperative by itself can convey a neutral order. However, it can be strengthened, i.e. the peremptory nature of the command can be intensified; in that case, “imperatives are expected to be more formally marked than neutral imperatives” (AIKHENVALD, 2010, p. 204). To illustrate this property, Aikhenvald points to an example in Haro, an Omotic language from Ethiopia, in which an utterance marked by an emphatic *-te* following the imperative expresses a stronger command than the neutral imperative.

Therefore, although the notion of emphasis is an intuitive one, we assume that an emphatic order is a recourse the speaker employs to show the hearer that the context is such that they (the hearer) must comply with the given order. Some available grammatical marking of emphasis in languages would be, for instance, a characteristic prosody, the presence/absence of the subject or the use of markers⁶. We assume that the AF and BP pragmaticalized forms discussed in this paper are part of the range of resources that can mark the emphasis in a directive speech act. Since our main objective

⁴ This discussion is based on Rodrigues and Lunguinho (2017).

⁵ For a characterization of speech acts, see, for instance, Searle (1975).

⁶ For an extensive discussion about grammatical marking of strength of command, see Aikhenvald (2010, section 6.3)

is to discuss this emphatic reading in contrast with a more neutral use of imperatives, we will not distinguish, when talking about this more neutral use, orders or commands from requests or suggestions, using these terms indistinctively.

As for the concept of pragmaticalization, following Dostie (2004, 2009), we take it to be a process similar to grammaticalization, but with an outcome that bears a pragmatic function instead of a more grammatical one. It is to be noted that the term *grammaticalization* is often used in the literature to refer to pragmaticalization. Grammaticalization is a process of linguistic change by which lexical items become grammatical items, and grammatical items achieve an even more grammatical status (HOPPER; TRAUGOTT, 2003; ROBERTS; ROUSSOU, 2003; HEINE; NARROG, 2012, among others). Heine and Narrog (2012) propose a set of four parameters to be used in the identification and description of grammaticalization instances: extension, desemanticization, decategorialization and erosion. The extension parameter refers to the emergence of new meanings from the extension of linguistic expressions to new contexts; the desemanticization parameter, also known as *semantic bleaching*, refers to loss in semantic content; the parameter of decategorialization concerns loss of morphosyntactic properties; and erosion refers to loss of phonetic substance.

We will argue that AF and BP utterances conveying an emphatic order involve a pragmatic marker – respectively *voir* and *vê* – that underwent a process of pragmaticalization starting from the lexical verb forms (*voir* and *ver*), by having been extended to new contexts and having lost semantic content and morphosyntactic properties. Consequently, our view is that this process is diachronic; however, an explanation for the path of semantic change from lexical meaning to pragmatic meaning for those markers is beyond the objectives of the current study. Furthermore, whether or not there remains a discernible semantic relation between the lexical verb and the pragmatic marker does not interfere with our description of the data⁷.

Acadian French *voir*

In this section, we provide a sketch of *voir* in Acadian French as it appears in spontaneous (informal) imperative utterances. As shown in (7), *voir* most often pronounced [wɛ:r] in this dialect can be used in both affirmative and negative imperative constructions.

- (7) a. *Arrête voir tes gestes!*
stop-2sg-IMP see-INF your gestures
'Stop your nonsense!'

⁷ For an overview about the discussion on the polyfunctionality of discourse markers and the relationship between their meanings as a case of homonymy or polysemy, see Fischer (2006).

- b. *Casse-toi voir pas la tête avec ça!*
 break-2sg-IMP-you see-INF not the head with that
 ‘Don’t worry about that!’

These constructions are attested in different areas of the Atlantic provinces (Canada): in Nova Scotia (BOUDREAU, 1988; HENNEMAN; NEUMANN-HOLZCHUH, 2014), in New Brunswick (POIRIER, 1993; WIESMATH, 2006) and Newfoundland and Labrador (BRASSEUR, 2001). They are also in usage in Louisiana (DAIGLE, 1984; PAPEN; ROTTET, 1997; PARR, 1940; VALDMAN *et al.*, 2010).

Regarding their morphological properties, in these types of examples, *voir* does not have the typical behavior of verbs in general. Indeed, in imperative utterances, *voir* is invariable; it cannot be inflected (8a), which contrasts with the visual perception verb, that can bear all types of inflections for tense, mood and person (8b).

- (8) a. *Écoute voir/*vois/*verras/*voies une minute!*
 listen-2sg-IMP see-INF/*see-2sg-PRES.IND/*see-2sg-FUT/*see-2sg-SUBJ
 ‘Listen for one minute!’
 b. *Tu vois/verras/as vu.*
 you.sg see-PRES.IND/see-FUT/see-PSTPERF
 ‘You see/will see/saw.’

The distributional restrictions of Acadian French *voir* shows that this item does not have syntactic flexibility, much like clitics: it almost always has to follow the imperative verb.

Nominal phrases, either complements (9) or adjuncts (10), cannot be inserted between the conjugated verb in the imperative and *voir*.

- (9) a. *Mange voir ta pomme!/#Mange ta pomme voir!*⁸
 eat-2sg-IMP see-INF your apple/#eat-2sg-IMP your apple see-INF
 ‘Eat your apple!’/‘#Eat your apple and you will see!’
 b. *Pense voir à ta mère!/#Pense à ta mère voir!*
 think-2sg-IMP see-INF about your mother/#think-2sg-IMP about your
 mother see-INF
 ‘Think about your mother!’/‘#Think about your mother and you will see!’

⁸ The symbol # indicates that the utterance is well formed, but does not have the intended meaning. The utterances that are preceded by # in this article are used to dare someone to do something. In these cases, *voir* is used to express somewhat a threat and has retained the meaning of the visual perception verb. These utterances seem to be used elliptically, as in *Goûte ça (pour) voir (ce qui se passera)!* ‘Taste that (in order to) see (what will happen)!’.

- (10) a. *Téléphone voir demain!/#Téléphone demain voir!*
 phone-2sg-IMP see-INF tomorrow/#phone-2sg-IMP tomorrow see-INF
 ‘Phone tomorrow!’/‘#Phone tomorrow and you will see!’
- b. *Marche voir plus vite!/#Marche plus vite voir!*
 walk-2sg-IMP see-INF more fast/#walk-2sg-IMP more fast see-INF
 ‘Walk faster!’/‘#Walk faster and you will see!’

Also, as with clitics, the negation element *pas* cannot intervene between *voir* and the verb, as shown in (11).

- (11) a. *Casse-toi voir pas la tête avec ça!/*Casse-toi pas voir la tête avec ça!*
 break-2sg-IMP-you see-INF not the head with that/*break-2sg-IMP-you
 not see-INF the head with that
 ‘Don’t worry about that!’
- b. *Chut! Parle voir pas!/#Chut! Parle pas voir!*
 shh talk-2sg-IMP see-INF not/#shh talk-2sg-IMP not see-INF
 ‘Shh! Don’t talk!’/‘#Shh! Don’t talk and you will see.’

It seems that only certain pronouns, that is, clitics, can be inserted between the imperative and *voir*.

- (12) a. *Regarde-les voir; mes dessins!*
 look-2sg-IMP-them see-INF, my drawings
 ‘Look at them, at my drawings!’
- b. *Mange-la voir; ta pomme!*
 eat-2sg-IMP-it see-INF, your apple
 ‘Eat it, your apple!’
- c. *Brosse-toi-les voir; les dents!*
 brush-2sg-IMP-you-them see-INF, the teeth
 ‘Brush them, your teeth!’

The data in (12) can be accounted for easily by the fact that one hallmark property of clitics is that they lack autonomy or at least their autonomy is reduced; hence, they have to appear next to the verb. As can be seen from the data discussed above, the scope of *voir* is very narrow: it is limited to the imperative verb.

In regard to the semantic properties of these structures, as shown in (13), in imperative constructions, *voir* can co-occur with a perception verb (for instance, a visual or auditory perception verb), which shows that the use of this form is accompanied by the loss of characteristics associated to the perception verb. In other words, in these contexts, *voir* is characterized by desemantization.

- (13) *Écoute voir une minute!*
listen-2sg-IMP see-INF one minute
'Listen for one minute!'

Moreover, *voir* in these utterances can be omitted (14), which suggests that it does not add semantic content at the sentence level (or at least very little); rather, it has a function at the discourse level; in other words, it has a pragmatic function.

- (14) *Écoute (voir) une minute!*

Example in (15) further shows that *voir* in imperative contexts does not behave as a full-fledged verb; it cannot have arguments in contrast to the visual perception verb that can select different types of complements (for instance, nominal phrases and indicative subordinate clauses).

- (15) a. *Imagine (voir) l'oiseau!*
imagine-2sg-IMP (see-INF) the bird
'Imagine the bird!'
b. *Imagine (voir) que Marie est arrivée!*
imagine-2sg-IMP (see-INF) that Marie arrive-PSTPERF
'Imagine that Marie has arrived!'
c. *Il voit l'oiseau.*
he see-3sg-PRES.IND the bird
'He sees the bird.'
d. *Il voit que Marie est arrivée.*
he see-3sg-PRES.IND that Marie arrive-PSTPERF
'He sees that Marie has arrived.'

In (15a) and (15b), *voir* does not select the nominal phrase nor the indicative complement, which are arguments of the conjugated verb *imagine*. The fact that *voir* is not obligatory in these utterances provides support for this claim. However, *voir* in its use as a perception verb can take different types of complements, as illustrated in (15c) and (15d). If we hypothesize that *voir* in imperative contexts is derived from the perception verb, then we must conclude that it has lost its argument structure.

As shown in the imperative utterances discussed above, *voir* does not have the morphosyntactic and semantic/pragmatic properties of the perception verb from which it seems to be derived. Concerning the pragmatics of these constructions, it is argued that this use of *voir* has an emphatic function: it reinforces the imperative value by stating to the hearer that the context (linguistic or extralinguistic) is such that it requires them to undertake the action denoted by the imperative. For instance, for (16), *voir* can be linked to a linguistic antecedent or an extralinguistic antecedent.

- (16) *Ferme voir la porte!*
close-2sg-IMP see-INF the door
'Close the door!'

An example of a case where *voir* can be associated to a linguistic antecedent is linked in (17). Let us imagine a situation in which a couple is arriving at their home, after getting groceries. In this example, a request was previously formulated in the discourse by the speaker, but was ignored by the hearer. The use of the imperative with *voir* allows the speaker to signal to the hearer that they should base themselves on the context, which should be mutually salient because the utterance was just pronounced, and also to insist on their demand.

- (17) Speaker: *Peux-tu fermer la porte?*
can-2sg-PRES.IND you close-INF the door
'Could you close the door?'
- Hearer: *Je vais mettre les fruits dans le frigo.*
I go-PRES.IND put-INF the fruits in the fridge
'I will put the fruits in the fridge.'
- Speaker: *Ferme voir la porte!*
close-2sg-IMP see-INF the door
'Close the door!'

This example would also be perfectly acceptable if no linguistic context was available, as long as the speaker has access to sufficiently tangible or obvious information in the extralinguistic context. In these types of cases, the antecedent would not be formally uttered; it would be implicit from the extralinguistic context. Hence, *Ferme voir la porte!* 'Close the door!' could be uttered in cases where it is evident that there is too much noise, that the speaker has a secret to confide in and wants to discuss in private, that the speaker is cold, that their hands are full and that they are not able to close the door themselves. Crucially, the utterances with *voir*, as the one in (18), are only appropriate if the antecedent, be it a linguistic or an extralinguistic antecedent, is mutually obvious. Consequently, it would be considered bizarre to utter (18) in the case where no linguistic antecedent is available (if no previous request has been done) or in the case where, for instance, the utterance is pronounced by a parent and is addressed to a child who is disciplined, studious, and punctual in their work. In these cases, the utterance would be incoherent or infelicitous.

- (18) *Fais voir tes devoirs!*
do-2sg-IMP see-INF your homework
'Do your homework!'

In a nutshell, while an utterance such as (19a), where *voir* is absent, is used simply to make a request, (19b), with *voir*, highlights the fact that the hearer should infer from the linguistic or extralinguistic context that they should close the door. Therefore, (19b), but not (19a), renders salient the fact that the circumstances require the hearer to perform the specific action expressed by the imperative verb.

- (19) a. *Ferme la porte!*
 close-2sg-IMP the door
 ‘Close the door!’
- b. *Ferme voir la porte!*
 close-2sg-IMP see-INF the door
 ‘Close the door!’ (with the presupposition: Given the circumstances, common sense requires the addressee to perform this action.)

In these contexts, *voir* is similar to *donc* (lit.: *so*) in some of its uses in other varieties of French (see e.g., DOSTIE, 2004; VINCENT, 1993; VLEMINGS, 2003).

Brazilian Portuguese *vê*

In this section, we will discuss the ambiguous data from BP exemplified in (5), repeated here as (20) for convenience.

- (20) *Vê se me escuta!*
 see-2sg-IMP if me listen-2sg-PRES.IND
 ‘Listen to me!’ or ‘See if you can hear me!’

As mentioned in the introduction, this construction can have the same emphatic order reading as the AF constructions discussed in the previous section. However, it can also have a reading in which the perception verb means ‘to verify’. In order to compare AF and BP, we must first differentiate the two readings that BP constructions such as the one in (20) can receive. In this section, we address specifics of these readings and discuss their main properties.

The verification order reading in (20) could be uttered, for instance, in a context where the speaker says “the phone call quality is bad; let’s do a test to see if you can hear me”. On the other hand, with the emphatic order reading, (20) could be uttered in a context where the speaker says “you never listen to me, you never pay attention to my words, but in the end I’m always right”.

These two readings can thus be described as injunction readings; however, the sentences do not convey the same orders. In (20), for example, under the ‘to verify’ meaning, the speaker’s intention is to get the addressee to verify if they (the speaker) can be heard; it is not to get the addressee to pay attention to what they are saying, that

is, to the order given in relation to the linguistic or extralinguistic context. For the ‘to verify’ interpretation, the order to be executed is transmitted by the perception verb (which has in this case the meaning ‘to verify’ or ‘to determine’). (21a) would be a paraphrase of this reading. A possible reply for (20) could be (21b), with the perception verb, but not (21c), with the verb *escutar* ‘to listen’.

- (21) a. *Verifique se você pode ou não pode me escutar.*
 verify-2sg-IMP_{TRUE} if you can or not can me listen
 ‘Verify if you can or cannot hear me.’
- b. *Não, vê você se me escuta.*
 no, see-2sg-IMP_{TRUE} you if me listen
 ‘No, you see if you can hear me.’
- c. *#Eu não! Me escuta você!*
 I not! Me listen-2sg-IMP_{TRUE} you
 ‘I won’t! You listen to me!’

Under the emphatic order meaning, on the contrary, although the form *ver* ‘to see’ in (20) corresponds to the 2nd person singular of the true imperative, it does not convey an order to get the addressee to verify or to determine something; it communicates an emphatic order for the execution of the action denoted by the second verb. For instance, (22) is a paraphrase of that meaning in (20). A possible reply for (20) would be (22b), with the second verb, not (22c), with the perception verb.

- (22) a. *Me escuta/escute!*⁹
 Me listen-2sg-IMP_{TRUE}/listen-2sg-IMP_{SURROGATE}
 ‘Listen to me!’
- b. *Eu não! Me escuta você!*
 I not! Me listen-2sg-IMP_{TRUE} you
 ‘I won’t! You listen to me!’
- c. *#Eu não! Vê você!*
 I not! see-2sg-IMP_{TRUE} you
 #‘I won’t! You see if you can hear me!’

Despite the fact that (22a) is a paraphrase of (20) in the case of the emphatic order meaning, there is a pragmatic difference between these constructions. While the sentence in (22a) is used to make a request, to give an order or simply to draw the hearer’s attention to something the speaker thinks is important, the sentence in (20), under the emphatic order reading, emphasizes that the hearer should take the context into account and execute the specific action denoted by the second verb. It may be the

⁹ In BP, there is only one true form of the imperative, the second person singular; this true form can alternate with a surrogate subjunctive form. Unlike in European Portuguese and Spanish, the true imperative in BP, as well as the surrogate one, is compatible with negation (SCHERRE *et al.*, 2007).

case that a specific request has already been made before but was not heard (or ignored completely by the addressee) or it may be that there is salient information available from the context to both the speaker and the hearer. For instance, if A says to B “you never listen to me, you never pay attention to my words, but in the end I am always right”, and then utters (20), what A is implicitly stating is that B should really listen to them this time, because if B does not do so, as it happened in previous situations, B will probably encounter the same problems as before. This context could also be implicit and mutually obvious in the conversational situation.

In the next sections, we will see that differences between the emphatic order meaning and the ‘to verify’ meaning are correlated with morphosyntactic distinctions.

In the verifying reading, the perception verb displays a full paradigm, as illustrated in (23), with finite forms, and in (24), with non-finite forms. In fact, as shown by the examples, the imperative (23a), the present (23b) and the simple past (23c) forms are accepted. The perception verb can also be in the infinitive form (24a), appearing in the periphrastic future structure composed of the verb *go* in the present indicative form and the verb *see* in the infinitive; in the gerund form (24b), appearing in the past continuous structure composed of the verb *be* in the past imperfect and the verb *see* in the gerund form; and in the participle form (24c), appearing in the past perfect structure composed of the verb *have* in the past imperfect form and the verb *see* in the participle form.

(23) [+FINITE] forms

- a. *Vê se vai chover hoje.*
see-2sg-IMP if go-3-PRES.IND rain-INF today
‘Check if it’s going to rain today!’
- b. *Eu vejo se vai chover hoje.*
I see-1sg-PRES.IND if go-3sg-PRES.IND rain-INF today
‘I will check if it’s going to rain today.’
- c. *Ela viu se ia chover hoje.*
she see-1sg-SPPST if go-3sg-PSTIMP rain-INF today
‘She checked if it would rain today.’

(24) [-FINITE] forms

- a. *Eu vou ver se choveu.*
I go-1sg-PRES.IND see-INF if rain-3sg-PSTPERF
‘I will check if it rained.’
- b. *Eu estava vendo se tinha chovido.*
I be-1sg-PSTIMP see-GER if have-3sg-PSTIMP rain-PART
‘I was checking if it had rained.’
- c. *Eu tinha visto se ia chover.*
I have-1sg-PSTIMP see-PART if go-3sg-PSTIMP rain-INF
‘I had checked if it would rain.’

In the emphatic order reading, on the contrary, the perception verb has a fixed form, which is *vê*. As shown in (25) and (26), it cannot bear any other finite forms and it cannot bear non-finite forms. In this interpretation, *ver* displays instead a defective paradigm, permitting only one form, which is *vê*, imperative, second person, singular, as in (27).¹⁰

(25) [+FINITE] forms

- a. #*Eu vejo se (você) comeu!*
I see-1sg-PRES.IND if (you) eat-3sg-SPPST
Lit.: ‘I see if you ate!’
- b. #*Você viu se (você) vai comer!*
you see-3sg-SPPST if (you) go-3sg-PRES.IND eat-INF
Lit.: ‘You saw if you are going to eat!’
- c. #*Ela via se (você) estava comendo!*
she see-3sg-PSTIMP if (you) be-3sg-PSTIMP eat-GER
Lit.: ‘She saw if you were eating!’

(26) [-FINITE] forms

- a. #*Você está vendo se (você) vai comer!*
you be-3sg-PRES.IND see-GER if (you) go-3sg-PRES.IND eat-INF
Lit.: ‘You see if you are going to eat!’
- b. #*Você tinha visto se (você) comeu!*
you have-3sg-PSTIMP see-PART if (you) eat-3sg-SPPST
Lit.: ‘You had seen if you ate!’
- c. #*Vai ver se você come!*
you go-3sg-PRES.IND see-INF if (you) eat-3sg-PRES.IND
Lit.: ‘You will see if you are going to eat!’

(27) *Vê se (você) come!*

- see-2sg-IMP_{TRUE} if you eat-3sg-PRES.IND
Lit.: ‘See if you eat!’ = ‘Eat!’

When *ver* receives the verifying reading, it is a bivalent verb: two arguments are required with this predicate, an agent and a theme, as shown in (28): the theme is realized by a clause in (28a, b), and by a nominal phrase in (28c); the agent is realized by *pro* in (28a) and by the pronoun *ela* ‘she’ in (28b). Examples in (28d, e) show that these two arguments are required. It is also possible to insert a benefactive PP (31).

¹⁰ The surrogate form for the imperative (i) is accepted for some speakers.

(i) %Veja	se (você) come.
see-2sg-IMP _{SURROGATE} if (you)	eat-3sg-PRES.IND

- (28) a. *pro vê [se tem gente aí fora]!*
 see-2sg-IMP [if have-3sg-PRES.IND people there out]
 ‘Check if there are people outside!’
- b. *Ela viu [se tinha gente aí fora].*
 she see-3sg-SPPST [if have-3sg-PSTIMP people out there]
 ‘She checked if there were people outside.’
- c. *Vê o horário do trem.*
 see-2sg-IMP the schedule of+the train
 ‘Check the train schedule!’
- d. **pro_{expl} vê [se tem gente aí fora].*
- e. **pro vê.*
- (29) *Vê [pra mim] se eu estou com febre!*
 see-2sg-IMP to me if I be-1sg-PRES.IND with fever
 Lit.: ‘Check to me if I have a fever!’
 ‘Check for me if I have a fever!’

On the other hand, in the emphatic order reading, *vê* is a fixed form [imperative, 2nd person singular] which can only combine with a [*se...*] constituent (30). Example in (31) shows that it is impossible to insert a benefactive PP.

- (30) a. *Vê [se fica quieto]!*
 see-2sg-IMP [if stay-3sg-PRES.IND quiet]
 Lit.: ‘See if you stay quiet!’ = ‘Stay quiet!’
- b. **O menino viu [se ficava quieto].*
 the boy see-3sg-SPPST [if stay-3sg-PSTIMP quiet]
 Lit.: ‘The boy saw if he could stay quiet.’
- c. **pro_{expl} vê [se fica quieto]!*
- d. **pro vê.*
- (31) **Vê [pra mim] se fica quieto!*
 see-2sg-IMP [to me] if stay-3sg-PRES.IND quiet
 Lit.: ‘See for me if you stay quiet.’

Acadian French vs. Brazilian Portuguese

The two previous sections described constructions from AF and BP used to convey emphatic orders.¹¹ These constructions involve a form of the verb equivalent of *to see*: *voir* in AF and *vê* in BP. As described in detail in sections “Acadian French *voir*” and

¹¹ We will put aside in this section the other meaning of BP constructions.

“Brazilian Portuguese *vê*”, these forms do not have the morphosyntactic and semantic properties of the perception verb from which they seem to be derived. In contrast with the lexical verbs *voir* (AF) and *ver* (BP) ‘to see’, the forms *voir* and *vê* do not behave as full-fledged verbs in that they are invariable, fixed forms: in AF it only appears in the infinitive and in BP the 2nd person singular imperative form is the only one possible.¹² Moreover, these forms in both AF and BP lack an argument structure.

Their syntactic properties, however, are not the same. In AF constructions, we have an imperative sentence, and *voir* seems to exhibit characteristics akin to clitics, in the sense that it has to follow the imperative verb, unless it co-occurs with clitic pronouns. In BP, the sentence is in the indicative mood; the form *vê* does not behave like a clitic pronoun, unlike in AF, since it is not bound to the lexical verb; rather, this form seems to select a [*se...*] complement.

Despite these syntactic differences, AF and BP forms have the same pragmatic function: they emphasize an order, signaling to the addressee that they must take the (linguistic or extralinguistic) context into account and execute the action denoted by the lexical verb. In other words, these constructions can only be uttered if some contextual information is obvious for both the speaker and the hearer¹³.

As we will discuss in more detail in “Analysis”, we analyze the AF form *voir* and the BP form *vê* as pragmatic markers and we propose a similar syntactic analysis for both constructions, which is couched in the theoretical framework of Speas and Tenny (2003) and Hill (2007, 2014). The next section provides information on these studies.

Theoretical framework

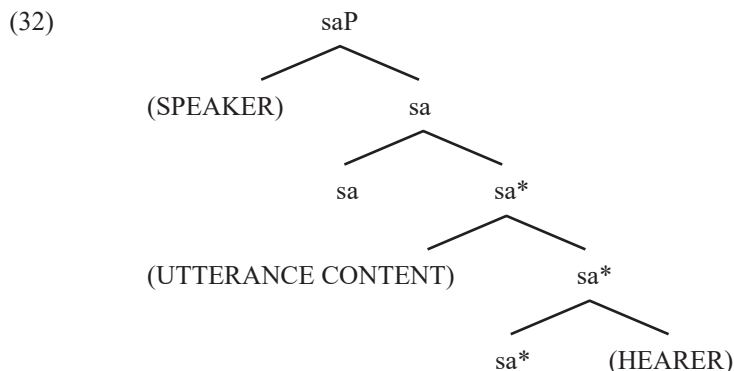
Several studies on the cartographic project (RIZZI, 1997, 2013; CINQUE 1999; CINQUE; RIZZI, 2012; RIZZI; CINQUE, 2016) argue that the pragmatic roles of *speaker* and *hearer* are syntactically encoded at the left periphery of clauses (SPEAS; TENNY, 2003; HILL, 2007, 2014; HAEGEMAN, 2014; MIYAGAWA, 2012). Their proposals intend to explain phenomena like vocatives, allocutive agreement, logophoricity, speaker-oriented particles, and grammaticalized adverbs, among others.

According to Speas and Tenny (2003) and Hill (2007, 2014), conversational pragmatics is encoded in syntax in a *Speech Act Phrase* (SAP), a performative predicative structure above the CP domain. This proposal is a revival of Ross’ (1970) Performative Hypothesis, according to which even declarative clauses would be performative. According to Ross, in Deep Structure (the input of interpretation), a declarative clause would be embedded in another clause containing a performative verb encoding the illocutionary declarative force of the utterance. The surface structure would be derived after the *performative deletion* rule was applied to delete the embedding clause.

¹² See note 4.

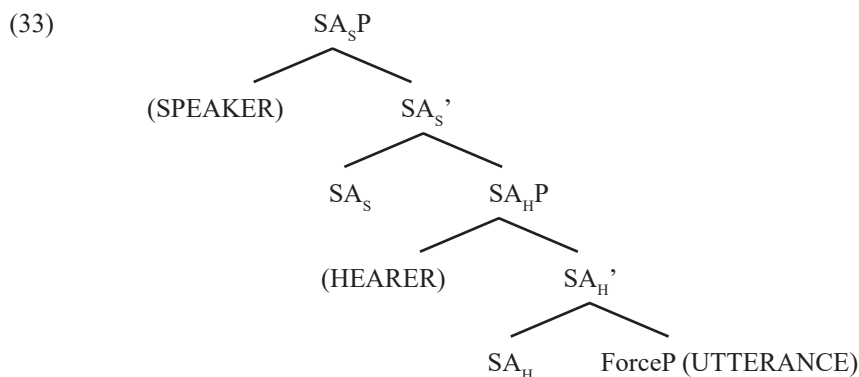
¹³ See the discussion about example (16) and the contextual information.

Speas and Tenny's SAP structure, on the contrary, does not involve a performative verb; it consists of two layers that extends the functional projection of the clause, as illustrated in (32). Speas and Tenny, following Hale and Keyser's (1999) ideas, argue that SA structure obeys the same restrictions found in argument structure. Hence, replicating the *vP* structure for the saturation of theta-roles, the SA head projects a structure that would ensure the saturation of pragmatic roles, with two head positions, two specifiers and one complement.



The authors argue that what is represented are not the speech acts as such, but the asymmetric relations among the pragmatic roles *speaker*, *hearer*, *utterance content*. This structural configuration would explain the restrictions observed on the number of grammaticized speech acts across languages.

On the basis of Romanian data, Hill (2014, p.147) proposes the modified representation given in (32) illustrated in (33).



Hill argues that the Romanian speech act particles provide lexical evidence for the *sa* head. These pragmatic particles entail a predicative interpretation, which leads to the prediction that this syntactic behavior follows from their merging at some level of SAP.

However, according to Hill, Romanian data suggest that these particles do not select *hearers*, but CPs (*utterance content*) headed by lexical complementizers. Hence, it would not be possible to propose *saP* to replace *ForceP*, since *Force*, being occupied by a complementizer, could not spell out the *speech act* head. In Hill's representation, *ForceP*, associated to the *utterance* role, is the complement of *sa*, while the *hearer* pragmatic role is saturated in *Spec*, *saP*, as are indirect objects in the *vP*. In Hill's (2014, p. 147) own words:

[...] there is a speech act head SAh that behaves as a verb insofar as it merges with a direct complement (*ForceP*) and projects a phrase structure that allows for the merging of a constituent in the hearer position (*Spec*, SAhP); the derivation extends with the speaker field (SAsP), where the speaker p-role is checked, possibly by a constituent merged in *Spec*, SAsP.

Analysis

As we have seen above, the AF construction in (4) and the BP construction in (5) can have the same emphatic order reading. Under this reading, AF *voir* and BP *vê* share some important properties, such as morphological invariability, and lack of argument structure; furthermore, they have the same pragmatic function (see section "Acadian French vs. Brazilian Portuguese"). These properties show that these elements underwent a process of decategorialization and desemantization, acquiring a pragmatic function, which is typical of the pragmaticalization process. As Dostie (2004, 2009), we take pragmaticalization to be a process similar to grammaticalization, but with an outcome that bears a pragmatic function instead of a more grammatical one. Hence AF and BP forms do not function as lexical verbs heading a matrix clause, but rather behave as pragmatic markers, emphasizing an order or a request. As we have discussed, the differences between AF constructions in (34) and between BP constructions in (35) can be accounted for in pragmatic terms. While the (a) utterances are simple requests or simple orders, the (b) utterances highlight the fact that the hearer should rely on the context which provides information that warrants that the situation should be executed.

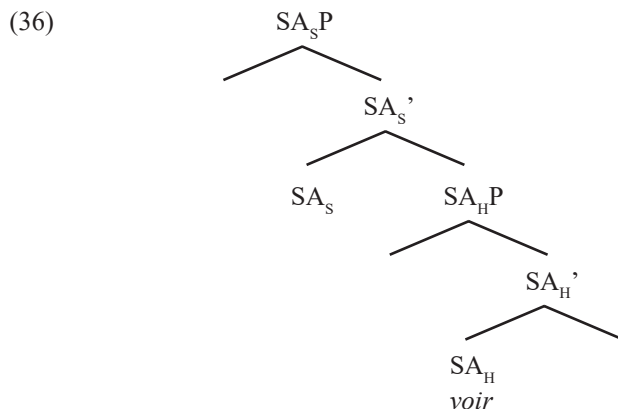
- (34) a. *Ferme la porte!*
b. *Ferme voir la porte!*

- (35) a. *Fecha a porta!*
b. *Vê se fecha a porta!*

Our hypothesis is that AF and BP emphatic order constructions are monoclausal structures, where *voir* and *vê* function as discourse markers externally merged in higher domains: SAP (HILL, 2007, 2014). Below we discuss the specifics of these structures.

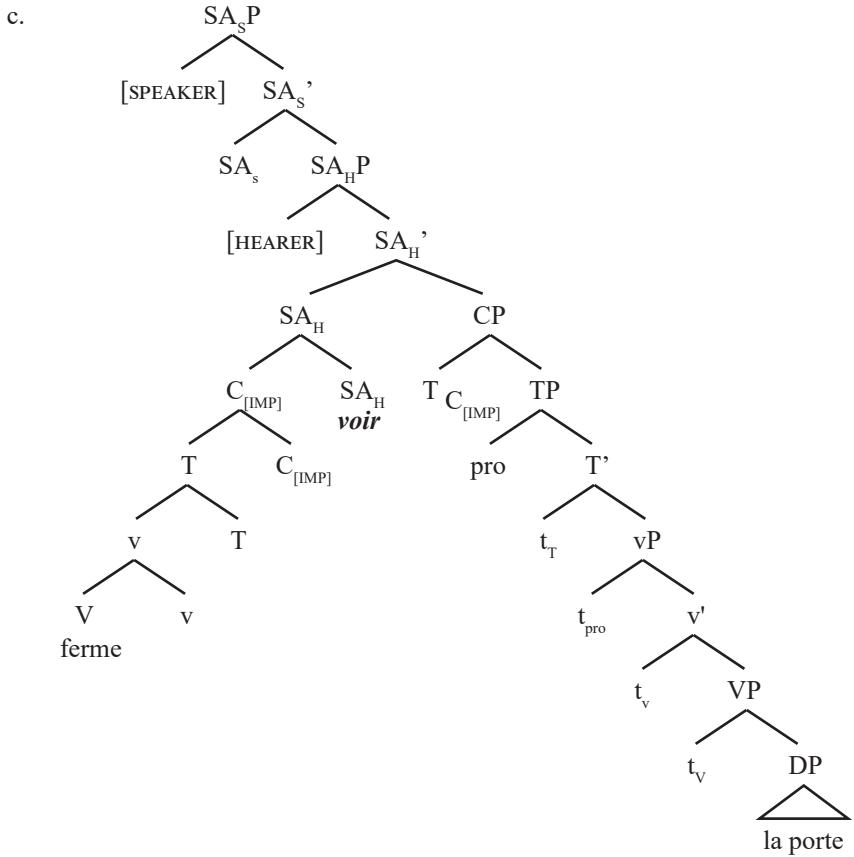
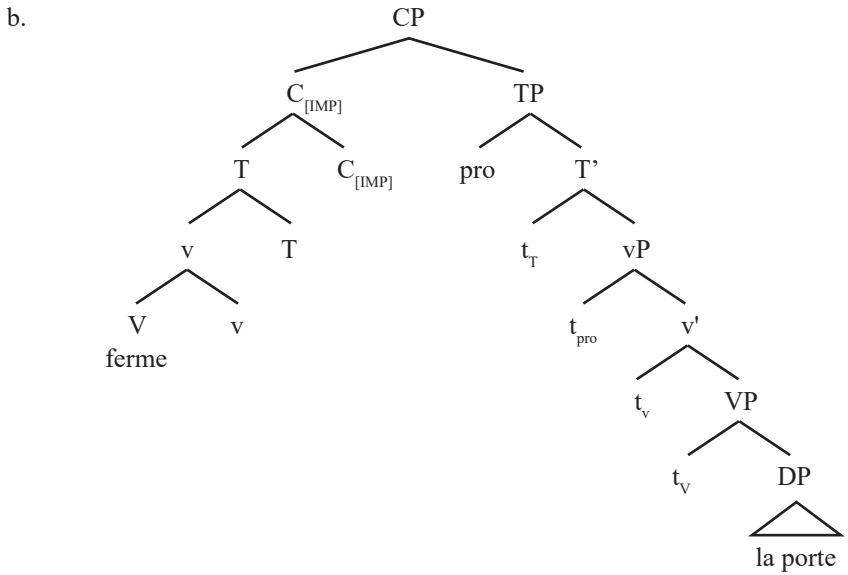
Moreover, we have seen that BP constructions can have another interpretation, which we dubbed the ‘to verify’ meaning. In this case, *vê* presents some properties that indicate it is a lexical verb and heads the matrix clause of a biclausal structure: it displays a full morphological paradigm and a full argument structure – an external argument (DP); an internal argument ($[_{\text{ForceP}} \textit{se} \dots]$ or DP) and an optional argument (benefactive PP). We present a detailed analysis for this reading below.

We argue that the speech act markers *voir* in AF and *vê* in BP are externally merged into SA_b , the head that encodes a pragmatic relation to the hearer, to indicate what they have to do in view of the (extra)linguistic context (36).



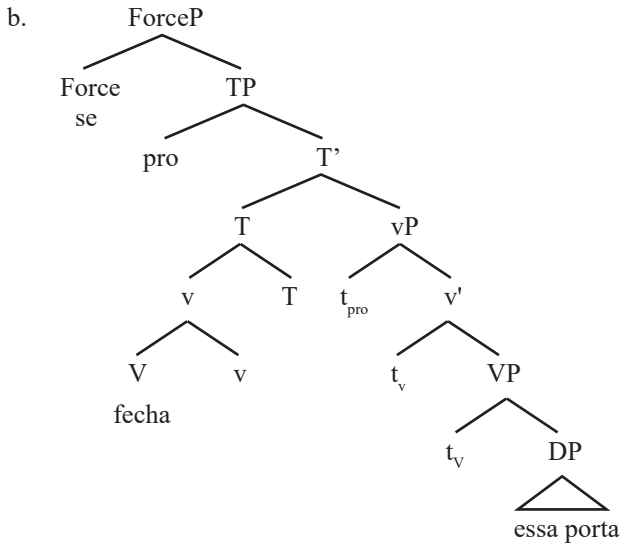
The structure’s derivation for the AF sentence in (37a) is shown in (37b-c).

- (37) a. *Ferme voir la porte!*
 close-2sg-IMP see-INF the door
 ‘Close the door!’

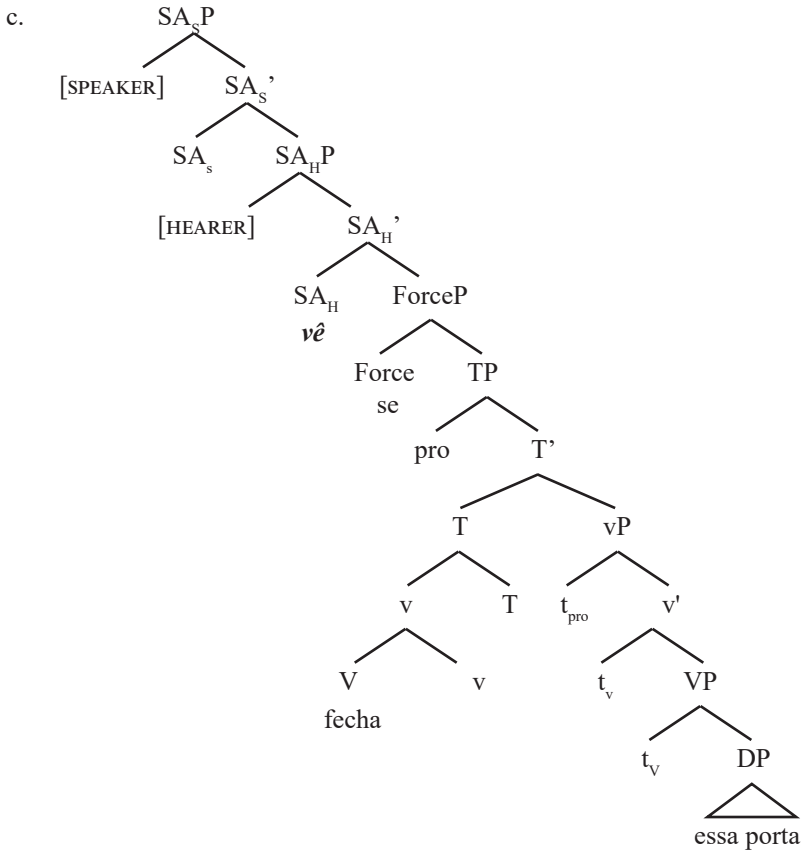


The structure's derivation for the BP sentence in (38a) is shown in (38b-c). We argue that the pragmatic marker *vê* in BP utterances expressing an emphatic order is derived from the lexical verb *ver* 'to see' in its use with a *se*-clause as complement. This functional element is merged in SA_H and selects a CP headed by the complementizer *se*¹⁴.

- (38) a. *Vê se fecha essa porta!*
 see-2sg-IMP if close-2sg-PRES.IND the door
 'Close the door.'



¹⁴ On functional elements that select a clause, see Cruschina (2015), Cruschina and Remberger (2018) and Hill (2014)



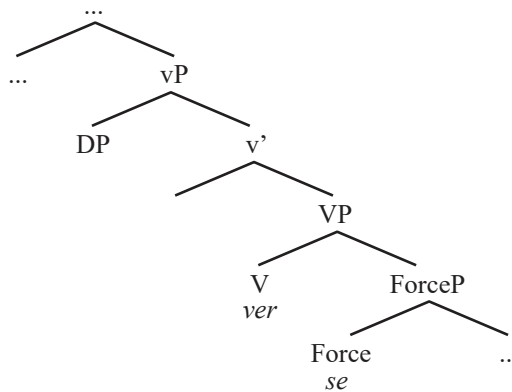
This analysis predicts that *vê* cannot be negated because it occupies a position higher in the syntactic representation than the position for negation. This prediction is borne out, as shown in (39) for BP¹⁵.

- (39) a. *Vê se não reclama!*
 see-2sg-IMP if not complain-2sg-PRES.IND
 ‘Don’t complain!’
 b. **Não vê se reclama!*

Our hypothesis to account for the verifying meaning of BP sentences is that they are biclausal structures; in this use, *vê* is a lexical verb, with the structure in (40).

¹⁵ See note 6.

(40)



This structure predicts that there are two temporal domains in the sentence and that both verbs can be negated. Data in (41) and (42) show respectively that these predictions are borne out.

- (41) a. *Eu vi se vai chover amanhã.*
I see-2sg-SPPST if go-3sg-PRES.IND rain-INF tomorrow
'I checked if it will rain tomorrow.'
[past, future]
- b. *Estou vendo se choveu ontem.*
be-1sg-PRES.IND see-GER if rain-3sg-SPPST yesterday
'I am checking if it rained yesterday.'
[present, past]
- (42) a. *Vê se ela não precisa de ajuda!*
see-2sg-IMP if she not need-3sg-PRES.IND of help
'Check if she doesn't need help!'
- b. *Não vê se ele conserta carro!*
not see-2sg-IMP if he fix-3sg-PRES.IND car
'Do not check if he fixes cars!'
- c. *Não vê se ele não tomou banho!*
not see-2sg-IMP if he not take-3sg-SPPST bath
'Don't check if he hasn't bathed!'

These data show that the range of meanings generally associated with perception verbs, especially to the verb 'to see', must be extended. In addition to the meanings of *direct*, *indirect* and *imaginative* perception, it is possible to include the meaning of *verifying* perception (perception with a verification, inquiring, checking objective). We argue that these data corroborate Labelle's (1996) and Boivin's (1998) hypothesis that the different readings of 'to see' are associated to a single lexical entry, which codifies an

abstract and underspecified meaning ('to perceive'). This underspecified meaning would become more precise according to the complement the perception verb is associated with. Therefore, the verb 'to see' is not itself ambiguous: its multiple interpretations are the result of its association with distinct types of complements. These different structures would realize the semantic selection of 'to see', which Labelle (1996) terms "Object of Perception". Labelle argues that, given the multiple semantic categories that can be selected by this verb (Proposition, Event, Action, Object), it is preferable to subsume them under a more general one. Hence, every construction having a compatible semantic type with "Object of Perception" could be a complement of 'to see'.

In the cases discussed in this paper, the verification meaning of 'to see' would be derived from the more general meaning 'to perceive'. Considering that the definition for 'to verify' as "to establish the truth, accuracy, or reality of" (*Merriam-Webster*, online), it is possible to argue that, to state the truth of a situation, this situation must be previously perceived. Therefore, in a sentence like (43), the content expressed by the *se*-clause can be true or false, since the complementizer *se* introduces an interrogative clause, whose truth value is open (RODRIGUES; LUNGUINHO, 2017). It is hence this "open truth value situation" of the *se*-clause that specifies the meaning of 'to see' as 'verification', 'inquiry'.¹⁶

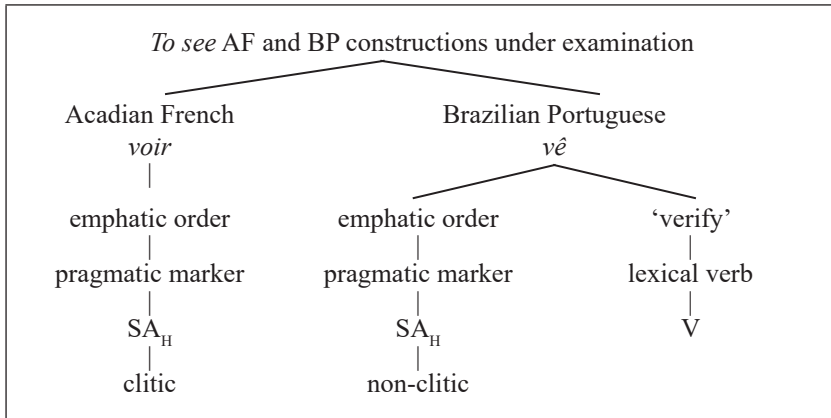
- (43) *Vê se ela precisa de ajuda!*
 see-2sg-IMP if she need-3sg-PRES.IND of help
 'Check if she does not need help!'

Figure 1 summarizes the analysis for the constructions studied.

¹⁶ In sentences like (i), (ii) and (iii), whose complements are indirect interrogatives, 'to see' also has a verifying meaning.

- (i) *Vê como a Maria pagou a conta da farmácia.*
 see how the Maria paid the drugstore bill
 'See how Maria paid the drugstore bill.'
- (ii) *Vê por que a Maria ainda não chegou.*
 see why the Maria yet not arrived
 'See why Maria hasn't arrived yet.'
- (iii) *Vê quando a Maria vai chegar.*
 see when the Maria will arrive
 'See when Maria will arrive'.

Figure 1 – Analysis



Source: Author's elaboration.

Final remarks

In this paper, we described the properties of *voir* (Acadian French) and *vê* (Brazilian Portuguese) used to convey an emphatic order. We argued that these forms are pragmaticalized elements, i.e. injunctive pragmatic markers externally merged on SA_HP (HILL, 2007, 2014), and that the sentences in which these markers appear are the realization of different operations applied to the same abstract structure of (functional) heads.

We also showed that *vê* in constructions with the form [*vê* + *se* ...] in Brazilian Portuguese can be associated with: a) an emphatic order meaning or b) a verification meaning. Despite being superficially similar, they are semantically and syntactically different:

(i) when *vê* expresses an emphatic order, [*vê se*...] is a monoclausal structure and *vê* is a SA_H head;

(ii) when *vê* express a verify meaning, [*vê se*...] is a biclausal structure and *vê* is a lexical head.

LÉGER, C.; LUNGUINHO, M.; RODRIGUES, P. Ver em francês acadiano e português brasileiro: codificação de imperativo e de saliência textual. *Alfa*, São Paulo, v.65, 2021.

- *RESUMO*: Este artigo discute construções do português brasileiro (PB) e da fala informal do francês acadiano (FA) nas quais formas equivalentes à do verbo 'ver' aparecem em enunciados imperativos contendo um segundo verbo. Nessas construções, 'ver' enfatiza a injunção expressa por esse segundo verbo. A construção do PB apresenta também uma leitura adicional, na

qual a forma 'vê' tem o significado de 'verificar'. O artigo propõe que as construções do PB podem ser associadas a duas estruturas distintas. As construções com o significado de 'verificar' são tratadas como estruturas bioracionais nas quais o verbo 'ver' seleciona um CP nucleado pelo complementador 'se'. Com relação à análise do significado de ordem enfática associado às construções do PB e do AF, adota-se as propostas de Speas e Tenny (2003) e de Hill (2007, 2014), segundo as quais a pragmática conversacional é codificada na sintaxe com uma estrutura predicativa (uma projeção associada ao ato de fala - SAP) acima de CP. Com base nessas propostas, analisa-se as construções de ordem enfática do PB e do AF como estruturas mono-oracionais, em que 'vê' e 'voir' são marcadores pragmáticos injuntivos inseridos diretamente no núcleo SA para codificar uma relação pragmática.

- **PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** marcador pragmático; verbos de percepção; línguas românicas; gramaticalização; dessemantização.

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