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Vernacular Brazilian Portuguese as a Literary Medium in Valdomiro Silveira's *Leréias*

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Abstract:

This article analyzes the representation of features of the *Caipira* rural dialect of Vernacular Brazilian Portuguese in the stories included in the book *Leréias* ("Yarns"), by regionalist writer Valdomiro Silveira.

Keywords : Vernacular Brazilian Portuguese, *Caipira* dialect, *Leréias*, Valdomiro Silveira, literary dialect, literary linguistics.

1. Vernacular Brazilian Portuguese as a literary dialect.

Writers have traditionally portrayed orality by means of literary dialect, a device defined by Ives (1971: 146) as "a stylized representation of speech by means of nonstandard, regional, social, or even individual features."¹ Following up on previous research², the present article analyzes the use of phonological, morphosyntactic, and lexical features in the literary representation of the rural variety of Vernacular Brazilian Portuguese (VBP) known as *Caipira* dialect, in the book *Leréias* ("Yarns"), a collection of twenty-four stories by Valdomiro Silveira (1975), one of the earliest regionalist writers in Brazil, who portrayed the dialect in stories gathered in four published books.³ This book is particularly interesting from the viewpoint of the representation of orality because, unlike his first three books, in which a narrator uses standard Portuguese, the twenty-four narratives included in *Leréias* are told by dialect-speaking homodiegetic narrators, whence the subtitle, "histórias contadas por eles mesmos" ('stories told by themselves'), which clearly alludes to the rural characters. Consistent use of literary

1 Recent scholarship on literary dialect includes Schneider and Christian's (2006) analysis of the representation of Jamaican creole in Michael Thelwell's novel, *The Harder They Come*. See also the articles in the *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4 : 4 (2000), in *Language and Literature* 10 : 2 (2001), Azevedo (2002), and the papers in Bernstein (1994).

2 The present article is part of a project on the literary representation of Vernacular Brazilian Portuguese that includes Azevedo (1995, 2003, 2005b, and 2007).

3 Silveira's published books include *Os caboclos* (Rio de Janeiro: Revista do Brasil, 1920), *Nas serras e nas furnas* (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1931), *Mixuangos* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editora, 1937), and *Leréias, Histórias contadas por eles mesmos*. (São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editora, 1945, 2nd edition 1975). Thirty-six stories from these books have been collected in Silveira (1974). An unpublished book found in Silveira's files is analyzed in Barbosa (2007).

dialect imparts uniformity to the narrative, evoking an illusion of orality enhanced by the fact that in every story a rural character spins his or her yarn while addressing a silent, unidentified interlocutor.

A word about VBP is in order. The occurrence of similar features in VBP and in Portuguese-based African creoles has led some scholars to suggest that VBP might descend from creoles spoken by African slaves taken to Brazil during the colonial period⁴. Others have proposed that VBP features might result instead from diachronic changes in the language of Portuguese settlers who started going to Brazil in the sixteenth century. According to a hypothesis submitted by Holm (2004), VBP might be the outcome of partial restructuring induced by contact between the varieties of Portuguese spoken by those settlers and the slaves' languages, which might include Portuguese-based creoles developed in Africa. Linguistic leveling would then account for the formation of a vernacular which "probably played a key role in spreading a newly leveled variety of Portuguese" (Holm 2004: 56), from which VBP might have originated. Whatever its precise origin, and in spite of being spoken by a large proportion of Brazil's population, VBP enjoys scant social recognition as a legitimate variety. Traditionally, if erroneously, dismissed as incorrectly spoken Portuguese (Praxedes 2008), it has long been used in literature, popular theater, radio, and television as a vehicle for portraying —often comically— the speech of illiterate country folk or lower-class urban dwellers. Silveira, however, was remarkable for his respectful treatment of his characters, depicted with a credible depth of feeling and always speaking the *Caipira* dialect, which at the time was widespread in the hinterland of the states of São Paulo and southern Minas Gerais. Although factors such as generalized schooling, the urbanization process, and the media have contributed to disseminate standard Portuguese throughout that region in the second half of the last century, both casual observation and systematic research show that *Caipira* features still occur regularly not only in rural areas but also in urban regions that have received an influx of dialect-speaking migrants.⁵

4 For an overview of the issue of the origin of VBP, see Azevedo (2005a: 250–253) and the bibliography therein.

5 According to Houaiss *et al.*, the etymology of *Caipira*, though uncertain, may be related to *caipora*, from the Tupi language, *caa'pora* < *kaa* 'woods' + *pora* 'dweller'. The *Caipira* individual is essentially a rural dweller, whose speech contrasts markedly with that of urban dwellers. The *Caipira* dialect was first described by Amaral (1920); other studies include Bortoni-Ricardo (1981, 1985), Head (1973), Istre (1971), Quicoli (1978), and Rodrigues (1974). Studies of Vernacular Brazilian Portuguese include Nascentes (1922), Marroquim (1934), and Guy (1981). Sociolinguistic aspects of standard vs. nonstandard Portuguese are treated in Bagno (1999, 2000, 2002), Bortoni-Ricardo (1985), Perini (1997), and Praxedes (2008). About *Caipira* culture, see Brandão (1983).

2. A biographical sketch.

A brief look at Silveira's biography should help contextualize his work as a fiction writer, an activity he maintained while practicing law and participating in politics and public administration. Valdomiro Silveira (1873–1941) was born in today's Cachoeira Paulista, a small town in the eastern region of the State of São Paulo.⁶ When he was one year old, his family moved to the capital city of São Paulo, and when he was eight the family went to Casa Branca, another small town in the north of the same state. At age 17 he returned to São Paulo to study law, and after graduating he practiced law in the interior of the state until 1905, when he moved to the port city of Santos, where he lived until his death at age 67. It is thus apparent that Silveira was exposed to the *Caipira* dialect during most of his life, including the thirty-six years spent in Santos, the surroundings of which were part of that culture, locally known as Caiçara (Istre 1971).

Like other regionalist authors, Silveira set his stories in the countryside (Almeida, 1999: 317), establishing a rural connection that enabled him to portray the ways and speech of country folk, who actually made up most of the population of pre-industrialized Brazil.⁷ Gonçalves (1975: xi) describes Silveira as a keen student of the dialect, suggesting an unusual seriousness of purpose at a time when dialectological studies were barely known in the country. However, rather than trying to reproduce the vernacular faithfully, Silveira, like other regionalist writers, used it as a foundation for representations designed to evoke country talk. Readers, who were likely to be primarily urban dwellers, could be expected to recognize the dialect, which they heard daily from servants and other working-class persons with country roots. In fact, some readers might have ambivalent feelings about the vernacular: funny, quaint, or picturesque as it might appear in fiction, it was also the speech of a social Other with whom they might not necessarily want to identify.

Some of Silveira's contemporary fictionists, such as Belmiro Braga (1935) or Cornélio Pires (1924, 1929) made ample use of the *Caipira* dialect as an element of humor (Azevedo 1995). Silveira, on the contrary, used its features selectively to fashion out a discrete contrast between his characters' speech and the standard language.⁸ Specifically, he eschewed two outstanding and socially stigmatized features of the dialect that were abundantly featured in the works other writers, namely lack of

6 For further information on Silveira, see Élis (1974), Gonçalves (1974), Guimarães (1974), and Ramos (1975).

7 Until the middle of the twentieth century, Brazil was mostly a rural country: in 1940, only about 30% of the population lived in urban areas, whereas in 2006 that percentage had grown to 81%." Brasil - População" (<http://www.portalbrasil.net/brasil_populacao.htm>); (<<http://br.geocities.com/vinicrashbr/historia/brasil/historiadapopulacaobrasileira.htm>>).

8 Ramos (1975: xxxi) comments on the development of Silveira's representation in different versions of one of his early stories.

subject-verb agreement in the verb phrase and lack of noun-qualifier number agreement in the noun phrase (Azevedo 2005: 226 – 228).

3. Analysis.

The following analysis is based on a corpus of data taken from the twenty-four stories in *Leréias*.⁹ The examples cited have been chosen as sufficiently representative of the dialect to be recognized as such by readers of Brazilian Portuguese.

(1) Phonology. One of the contrasts between the vernacular and the standard variety consists in lexicalized forms that can be explained by phonological processes. Although stressed vowels are relatively stable in Brazilian Portuguese, a few instances of variation are found in the *Caipira* variety. Stressed vowels show variation in quality, as in the following examples.¹⁰

- [1] stressed /ε/ for /a/: *réiva//raiva* ‘anger’ (L/TQ, 73).
- [2] stressed /u/ for /o/: *tuda//todas* ‘all’ (L/CA, 100), *tudo// todos* ‘all’ [L/Vio, 106).
- [3] stressed /ε/ for /i/: *inséste//insiste* ‘insists’ (L/TQ, 75). *véve//vive* ‘lives’ (L/BC, 89). *asséste//assiste* ‘assists’ (L/BC, 89).

Unstressed vowels, on the other hand, show considerable variation, particularly in pretonic position, as shown in Figure 1. The following examples are representative:

- [4] pretonic /ε/ or /e/ for /a/: *rezão [ε/e]//razão* ‘reason’ (L/PC, 4).
- [5] pretonic /i/ for /a/: *minhã//manhã* ‘morning’ (L/FL, 34).
- [6] pretonic /a/ for /e/: *antão//então* ‘then’ (L/TQ, 75).
- [7] pretonic /i/ for /e/: *piquenina//pequenina* ‘tiny’ (L/FL, 33); *Ginerosa// Generosa* ‘Generous’ (a woman’s name) (L/TQ, 73), *similhante//semelhante* ‘similar’ (L/PC, 6).
- [8] pretonic /u/ for /e/: *sumanas//semanas* ‘weeks’ (L/BC, 90).

9 The stories from the second edition of *Leréias* (Silveira 1975) are identified by the initials in parentheses: “Pedaco de cumbersa” (L/PC), 3–7; “Cobra mandada” (L/CM), 8–13; “Na ilha da Moéla” (L/IM, 14–17); “A consulta do Lau” (L/CL), 18–23; “Do pala aberto” (L/PA), 24–27; “Visão” (L/V), 28–32; “Na folha larga” (L/FL), 33–36; “Cantador” (L/Ca), 37–42; “Sonharada” (L/So), 43–47; “No escuro da noite” (L/Es), 48–53; Mau costume (L/Mau), 54–57; “A pantasma” (L/Pan, 78–61), “Tal e qual” (L/TQ, 73–78; “Ciumada” (L/Ciu), 62–67; “Ué!” (L/Ué), 68–72; “Tal e qual” (L/Tal), 73–78; “Força escondida” (L/FE, 79–83); “Coração à larga” (L/Cor), 84–88; “Bruto canéla” (L/BC, 89–97; “Ao correr das águas” (L/CA, 98–102; “Violento” (L/Vio, 103–108); “Com Deus e as almas” (L/Com), 113–118; “Resignado” (L/Res), 119–121; “Aquele tarde turva...” (L/Aqu), 122–129.

10 In the examples a double slash indicates a sequence of *vernacular //standard*.

- [9] pretonic /e/ for /i/: *deferença//diferença* ‘difference’ (L/FL, 34). *dereito//direito* ‘correct’ (L/CA, 101), *premeira//primeira* ‘first’ (L/Vio, 106), *selêncio//silêncio* ‘silence’ (L/BC, 94).
- [10] pretonic /u/ for /o/: *suzinho//sozinho* ‘alone’ (L/FL, 36).
- [11] pretonic /a/ for /o/: *saluçando//soluçando* ‘sobbing’ (L/CA, 98).
- [12] pretonic /e/ for /o/: *prepósito//propósito* ‘purpose’ (L/CA, 100), *delorida//dolorida* ‘painful’ (L/CL, 23).
- [13] pretonic /i/ for /o/: *pissuir//possuir* ‘possess’ (L/CA, 101).
- [14] pretonic /u/ for /o/: *jugar//jogar* / ‘to play’ (L/IM, 17), *sussegava//sossegava* ‘calmed down’ (L/CA, 100).
- [15] pretonic /o/ for /u/: *sojeito//sujeito* ‘an individual’ (L/CL, 19), *soporto//suporto* ‘I tolerate’ (L/FL, 35).

Other phonological processes affecting vowels include diphthongization, monophthongization, and denasalization:

- [16] Diphthongization: [oi] for [o]: *coiração//coração* ‘heart’ (L/CL, 20), [ui] for [u]: *escutei//escutei* ‘I heard’ (L/BC, 90); diphthongization may be related to a shift in stress placement, as in for [uĩ] for [u-ĩ]: *ruim // rúim* ‘bad’ (L/CL, 20).
- [17] Monophthongization: [o] for [au]: *osência//ausência* ‘absence’ (L/PC, 4); *sodade//saudade* ‘longing’ (L/CA, 102), *Ogusta//Augusta* (L/FE, 79).
- [18] Denasalization and monophthongization reduces word-final [eĩ] to a simple vowel [i]. This process is often interpreted in terms of spelling as the loss of final *m*, which Silveira, following a respelling tradition, indicated by means of an apostrophe: (18) *home’//homem* ‘man’ (L/CL, 19); *camaradage’//camaradagem* ‘camaraderie’ (L/CL, 19); *ferrage’//ferragem* ‘irons’ (L/CL, 21), *passage’//passagem* ‘passage’ (L/CL, 22)

Processes affecting consonants include rhotacism, metathesis, palatalization, and segment loss and addition. The resulting forms, as in the following examples, are socially stigmatized, and consequently any one of them suffices for characterize a character as speaking the vernacular:

- [1] Rhotacism involves primarily change of implosive /l/ into /r/: *arguém//alguém* ‘someone’ (L/FL, 34); *artos//altos* ‘tall’ (L/FL, 33); *carcou//calcou* ‘pressed’ (L/TQ, 77); *quarquer//qualquer* ‘any’ (L/FL, 34); *sortera//solteira*

'unmarried' (L/FL, 35), *vortei//voltei* 'I came back' (L/FE, 81). Also common is rhotacism of /l/ in consonant clusters: *cabocrinha//caboclinha* 'country girl' (L/PC, 3); *crara // clara* 'clear' (L/FL, 33); *crarear//clarear* 'to clear up' (L/PA, 24); *sembrante//semblante* 'aspect' (L/BC, 93), *fror//flor* 'flower' (L/Ca, 38). Occasionally, rhotacism involves another implosive consonant, such as /s/, *fórfo//fósforo* 'match' (L/FE, 81).

[2] Two kinds of metatheses are found in the corpus. One involves breaking up a consonant cluster when a vowel shifts to a position between the stop and the liquid, following the general scheme **stop + liquid + vowel > stop + vowel + liquid**: /kɾ/ *aquerditei* [kɛɾ]//*acreditei* 'I believed' (L/CA, 99); /pɾ/ *percipitado / precipitado* 'hurried' (L/BC, 96); *percurava//procurava* (with change of /o/ > /e/) (L/TQ, 74); *pertendia//pretendia* (L/PC, 6). In the second type of metathesis a vowel originally situated between a stop and a liquid shifts to a position after the latter, originating a cluster according to the general scheme **stop + V + liquid > stop + liquid + V**. Thus we have /d/ V /ɾ/ > /dɾ/ V: *drumia//dormia* 'slept' (L/CL, 21), and /t/ V /ɾ/ > /tɾ/ V: *atromentados//atormentados* 'tormented' (L/CL, 23); *detreminou//determinou* 'determined' (L/TQ, 76); *trocido//torcido* 'twisted' (L/FL, 35), *estróva//estorva* 'embarrasses' (L/Cor, 85).

[3] Palatalization involves change of /z/ to /ʒ/, often by assimilation to a nearby /ʒ/, as in *ejagera//exagera* 'exaggerates' (Le/PC, 4), *ejigiu//exigiu* 'demanded' (L/IM, 16). In items like *inquiijilar//inquizilar* 'to annoy' (L/FE, 80) and *quaji//quase* 'almost' (Le/PC, 4), palatalization may be conditioned by the front vowel /i/.

[4] Segment loss affects both vowels and consonants, and entails loss of syllables (often indicated by an apostrophe in Silveira's spelling) in pretonic position, as in *inda//ainda* (L/PC, 4), *tava//estava* (Le/PC, 4), *avinha//avezinha* 'little bird' (L/Res, 119), or in post-tonic position, as in *relamp'o//relâmpago* (L/Ciu, 66), *estâmo//estômago* 'stomach' (L/Ué, 70), *musga//música* 'music' (L/Tal, 76), *córgo//córrego* 'brook' (L/So, 45).

[5] Segment addition involves several processes, such as epenthesis of /e/ or /i/ to break up learned consonant sequences not admitted by the phonotactics of VBP, as in *adimirado//admirado* 'surprised' (L/Com, 114), *adimete//admite* (L/Vio, 105) (*adimete* also shows change of /i/ to /ɛ/). In fact, nowadays this process is widespread in Brazil, even in colloquial educated speech (Câmara 1972: 48). Also prevalent is the insertion of prothetic /a/, as in *adivirtam //divirtam* 'amuse' (L/CA, 101), *alembre//lembre* 'recall' (L/CA,

102). *amaguido*//*maguido* ‘wounded’ (L/So, 43), *assossegue*//*sossegue* ‘calm down’ (L/Ciu, 63), *asserene*//*serene* ‘tranquelize’ (L/Ciu, 63), *arreparar*//*reparar* ‘to notice’ (L/Ciu, 63). Another pervasive process involves insertion of an epenthetic vowel in a consonant cluster of the type stop + liquid, as in *emburullo*//*embrulho* ‘package’ (L/CL, 27), *Quelemente*//*Clemente* ‘Clement’ (L/Es, 49). Consonant insertion, in turn, is responsible for forms such as *embonecrado*//*embonecado* ‘dolloed up’ (L/CA, 101), *bonecra*//*boneca* ‘doll’ (L/FE, 81), and *sastifação*// *satisfação* ‘satisfaction’ (L/PA, 26).

(2) Morphosyntactic processes.

In standard Portuguese a qualifier agrees with the head noun in number, a process describable by a rule that copies the [plural] feature of the head noun onto its modifiers. Thus a string such as Det + Adj + N_{pl} + Adj originates Det_{pl} + Adj_{pl} + N_{pl} + Adj_{pl}, and consequently an NP such as *uma pobre mendiga_[pl] triste* ‘a poor sad beggar woman’ pluralizes as *umas pobres mendigas tristes* ‘some poor miserable beggar women’. In VBP, on the contrary, the pluralization marker occurs in the leftmost modifier, though not in the head noun, so that *uma pobre mendiga_[pl] triste* pluralizes as *umas pobre mendiga triste*. Although this process is one of the most salient features of VBP and is well attested in the literature (Amaral 1920), it only appears every now and then in Silveira’s stories, as for instance in the semi-lexicalized construction *às vez*’ for *às vezes* ‘sometimes’ (L/Ca, 37). Examples of standard number agreement include, among others, *as estradas* ‘the roads’ (L/V, 28–29), *as duas tranças* ‘the two braids’ (L/FL, 34), *os pés* ‘the feet’ (L/PC, 3), *poucas semanas* ‘a few weeks’ (L/CM, 12), *algumas lágrimas* ‘some tears’ (L/IM, 16). Occasionally one finds more elaborate constructions such as *modas antigas e modas novas* ‘the old songs and the new songs’ (L/Ca, 37) instead of *moda antiga e as moda nova*, which one would normally expect from a VBP speaker.

(3) Verb morphology.

Whereas in Standard Brazilian Portuguese the verb paradigm has four forms (corresponding to the persons Plsg *eu*, Plpl *nós*, P2/3sg *você/ele/ela*, P2/3pl *vocês/elas/elas*), in VBP verb paradigms have, according to the tense, three, two, or even only one form (Figure 2). Further, the vernacular systematically employs specific forms that depart considerably from the standard, such as the following forms for the first person plural (*nós*), with apocope of final /s/ indicated by an apostrophe (’):

[1] Present: *andemo*’//*andamos* ‘we walk’ (L/CM, 13); *só sabia as que serve*’ for *só sabia as que servem* ‘only knew the ones that serve’ (L/CL, 20).

[2] Preterite: *combinemo//combinamos* 'we agreed' (L/IM, 15); *fronteemo' // fronteamos* 'we faced' (L/IM, 15), *entremo'//entramos* 'we entered' (L/IM, 16); *troquemo'//trocamos* 'we exchanged' (L/BC, 91), *marquemo'//marcamos* 'we marked' (L/IM, 16).

[3] Imperfect: *nós levava'* for *nós levávamos* 'we took' (L/BC, 90); *nós escolhia'* for *nós escolhíamos* (L/IM, 15; *nós nem sabia'* for *nós nem sabíamos* (L/CL, 20)

Another aspect of vernacular verb morphology is the occurrence of socially stigmatized radicals that contrast vividly with their standard equivalents. For example, the infinitive of the high-frequency verb *pôr* 'to put' alternates with vernacular *ponhar* (based on the radical of the first person singular of the present indicative, *ponho*), hence *se ponhou//se pôs* '[he] placed himself' (L/FL, 35), *ela se ponhou . . . de cacunda* 'she lay down on her back' (L/FE, 81). Other salient vernacular forms include: *imo//fomos* 'we went' (L/Ca, 38, *truxe//trouxe* '(I) brought' (L/Mau 54), *pida//peça* 'ask' (L/FL, 35), *seje//seja* 'let it be' (L/BC, 89), (*eu*) *sube//soube* '[I] knew' (L/BC, 90), *vêve//vive* '[he] lives' (L/BC, 90), *insêste//existe* '[he] exists' (L/TQ, 75). There are a few forms that are archaic in standard Portuguese, such as *hai//há* 'there is/are' (L/PA, 24), cognate to Sp. *hay*, and *havêra//haveria* (L/PA, 25), parallel to Sp. *hubiera* 'might/would be'.

(4) Double negative construction.

Double negatives have been used in Portuguese since medieval times (Bueno 1955: 225). In constructions like the following examples they have an emphatic function that seems to be a feature of the popular language:¹¹

[1] *eu também não deixava de não querer casar co'ela // Eu também não deixava de querer casar com ela* 'I also wanted to marry her' (L/CL, 19); *ninguém não viu quando o Carrinho chegou // ninguém viu quando o Carrinho chegou* 'nobody saw when Carrinho arrived' (L/TQ, 76); *ninguém não se alembra // ninguém se lembra* 'nobody remembers' (L/PA, 24); *nunca não 'vi dizer // nunca ouvi dizer* 'I never heard it said' (L/V, 28)

(5) Pronouns and forms of address.

Portuguese inherited two second person forms from Latin, namely *tu* (< Lat. *tu*)

11 This use of double negatives is not to be confused with the Brazilian standard use of reiterative/emphatic *não* 'no' in sentences like *Eu não fui lá não* 'I didn't go there.'

for a single addressee and *vós* (< Lat. *vos*) for either a plural addressee or a single addressee entitled to deferential treatment. In medieval Portuguese the choice of an address pronoun hinged on the social relationship between interlocutors: a social superior addressed an inferior as *tu* and was called *vós*, while upper-class equals used reciprocal *vós* and lower-class individuals used reciprocal *tu*. Beginning in the sixteenth century, increasingly fine-graded social stratification caused variation in deference to be indicated by constructions combining the possessive *vossa* with an abstract noun referring to some exalted quality supposedly possessed by higher-placed individuals, as in *vossa alteza* ‘your highness,’ *vossa majestade* ‘your majesty,’ or *vossa mercê* ‘your mercy’ (Lindley Cintra, 1967). This latter form, originally reserved to monarchs, was eventually extended to persons of quality in general. As this happened, phonological processes eroded *vossa mercê*, originating a variety of forms such as *vassuncê*, *suncê*, *vosmecê*, *mecê*, *vancê*, *vacê*, *você* (the latter one reduced today, in casual pronunciation, to *ocê* [oÊse] or *cê* [se]). While there are regions in Brazil where *tu* is preferred among friends, by the end of the nineteenth century *ocê* contrasted, in rural usage, with its more deferential cousins, *vosmecê*, *mecê*, *vassuncê*, and *vacê*, as in the following examples:

[1] *criado de vassuncê* ‘your servant’ (L/IM, 14), *vancê ’tá meio novato aqui* ‘you’re a newcomer here’ (L/CL, 18), *vacê não tá lembrado* ‘you don’t remember’ (L/V, 29), *suncê já matou mesmo a mãe* ‘you have already killed (my) mother’ (L/FE, 82).

Other phonological processes reduced *senhor* to *sinhô*, *nhô*, *seu*, *seo*, *sô* and *senhora* to *sinhá*, *nhá*, *sa*. Combinations of these deferential forms include:

- [1] with men’s names: *nho Tónho* ‘Mr. Tónho’ (L/Pan, 59) *seu Fernando* ‘Mr. Fernando’ (L/PC, 7), *seo Chico* ‘Mr. Chico’ (L/CM, 8).
- [2] with women’s names: *Sa Zina* ‘Ms. Zina’ (L/FL, 35), *Sa Mariana* ‘Ms. Mariana’ (L/PC, 7), *nhá Zefa* ‘Ms. Zefa’ (L/PC, 7).
- [3] with titles: *seo Doutor* ‘Mr. Doctor’ (L/CL, 18).
- [4] *pai* ‘father’ and *mãe* ‘mother’, to show filial respect: *nho pai* ‘Mr. Father’ (L/CL, 19), *nhá mãe* ‘Ms. Mother’ (L/PA, 25).

(6) Clitics.

There is in Brazilian Portuguese a general trend to avoid clitics, particularly third-person ones (Cyrino 1993, Nunes 1993). One development of this tendency affects in-

trinsically reflexive verbs, that is, verbs that require a reflexive pronoun even though no reflexive action or process is implied. A typical such verb is *ir-se embora* 'to go away' which in the vernacular occurs with a lexicalized third person singular pronoun *se*, regardless of the person indicated by the subject, as in *eu ia s'embora*//*eu ia-me embora* 'I was going away' (L/FL, 33), *fui s'embora* 'I went away'//*fui-me embora* (L/FL, 36).

(7) The lexicon.

Like other regionalist authors, Silveira included a glossary at the end of his books, thus making it possible for readers to understand a number of terms which, at a time when there were no dictionaries reflecting Brazilian usage,¹² were an exotic feature that contributed to define regionalist literature. From today's perspective, it is apparent that regional lexicon includes archaisms, morphological variants classifiable as popular forms, and, as one might expect, many nouns referring to the environment, flora, fauna, and customs prevailing in the hinterland. Although these dialectal forms do not influence the structure of the language, they are of interest to lexicographers and require a separate study,¹³ and a brief sample will suffice as illustration.

[1] Flora: *cipó-cambira* 'a kind of vine,' *guacá*, *guaiuvira*, *guarandi*, *monjoleiro* 'kinds of trees'

[2] Fauna: *irra*, *jacu-caca*, *tiriba*, *borraiaira* 'kinds of birds,' *cambucu*, *pirapitinga*, 'kinds of fish'

[3] Activities: *cacundeiro* 'henchman,' *pago* 'day worker,' *gereba* 'prostitute,' *palhaço* 'spy,' *pingueleiro* 'gunman'

[4] Descriptive: *embonecrado* 'gaudy,' *espótico* 'angry,' *estúrdio* 'odd,' *esquipado* 'fast' (said of a horse)

[5] Things: *manguara* 'long stick,' *pruca* 'three-legged stool,' *cumbuca* 'bowl,' *majuva* 'food'

[6] Popular forms include morphological variants such as *inté*//*até* 'until' (L/PC, 3), *mais pequena*//*menor* 'smaller' (L/Es, 48), *causo*//*caso* 'story' (L/Diu, 62), as well as archaisms, such as *despois*//*depois* 'after' (Le/PC, 4), *preguntei*//*perguntei* 'I asked' (Le/PC, 4), *alembra*//*lembra* '3Psg remembers' (Le/PC, 4), *ansim*//*assim* 'thus' (L/FE, 80).

12 The first dictionary to specifically reflect Brazilian usage, *Pequeno Dicionário Brasileiro da Língua Portuguesa*, by Gustavo Barroso and Hildebrando Lima (Companhia Editora Nacional) was published in 1938. See Nunes (2008).

13 For an appraisal of Silveira's regional lexicon, see Nunes (1975).

We can appreciate the way Silveira's literary dialect shapes the text by comparing a passage chosen at random with a version in standard Portuguese:

Aqui na prisão os outros já **tenham** medo de mim, e **vêvem** pedindo mudança tudo o dia: afiançam que eu não paro na cama, e ando a noite inteira, e falo sem parada, e faço gesto em **desmasia**. Eu não sei de mim **quaji** nada, **dês** que houve o acontecido: e só o que lhe posso dizer é o que eu já disse **p'r'o** tal meu '**devogado**, **est'ro** dia: é que eu sou um marvado, não presto **p'ra** coisa **arguma**, e quero acabar a minha triste vida aqui mesmo... (L/FE, 83)

Aqui na prisão os outros já **tem** medo de mim, e **vivem** pedindo mudança todos o dias: afiançam que eu não paro na cama, e ando a noite inteira, e falo sem parada, e faço gesto em **demasia**. Eu não sei de mim **quase** nada, **desde** que houve o acontecido: e só o que lhe posso dizer é o que eu já disse **para** o tal meu **advogado**, este outro dia: é que eu sou um **malvado**, não presto **para** coisa **alguma**, e quero acabar a minha triste vida aqui mesmo... (M.M.A.)

Of eighty-nine lexical items, only eleven can be considered nonstandard, and at least two of these (namely *p'r'o* [pru] < *para o* and *p'ra* [pra] < *para*) occur regularly in the informal speech of educated speakers. Their representation may be considered an instance of eye dialect, that is a stylistic respelling intended to evoke or highlight certain pronunciation features (Bowdre 1971). The truly nonstandard items include the use of subjunctive *tenham* for indicative *tem* '(they) have', and the nonstandard present indicative *vêvem* for standard *vivem* 'they live'. The forms *quaji* (st. *quase* 'almost'), with palatalization of the fricative ([z] > [ʒ]), apocopated *dês* (st. *desde* 'since') and syncopated *est'ro* (st. *este outro* 'this other one') are clearly nonstandard, as is the rhotacism process responsible for *marvado* (st. *malvado* 'evil'). As to *adevogado*, it may have been considered more nonstandard in Silveira's time than nowadays, given the aforementioned prevalence of epenthesis of /e/ or /i/ in learned consonantal sequences, even in colloquial educated pronunciation.

For the literary linguist, Silveira's representation of rural speech holds interest as an artifact put together through careful selection of phonological, morphological, and lexical elements. In view of the near total absence of constructions without nominal or verbal agreement, which are a key element of VBP, that representation is clearly partial. Whatever the author's motivation to omit those crucial morphosyntactic features, the result is a tame representation which nonetheless accomplishes the aesthetic goal of establishing a contrast between the homodiegetic narrators' speech and the standard language, sufficient to flesh out an ample roster of types endowed with individual voices. These voices, cast both in direct and reported speech, create a heteroglossic effect (Bakhtin 2004: 331 ff.) that operates in a self-referential linguistic environment, marked at every step by nonstandard features that map out the space of the *Caipira* culture,

contrasting it with the urban culture with which most readers would associate. Given the diglossic relationship between the vernacular and the standard in Brazilian Portuguese, which parallels the social chasm between the uneducated and the educated, the literary representation of that subaltern dialect provides a socially suitable —if necessarily unidirectional— means to bridge the gap, making it possible for educated readers to access a domesticated version of the *Caipira* universe.

Figure 1. Variation in quality of a pretonic vowel (standard form shown in column 1)

	a	e	ɛ	i	o	u
a		rezão//razão 'reason' (L/PC, 4)	rézão// razão 'reason'	minhã//manhã 'morning'		
e	antão//então 'then' (L/TQ, 75)			simelhante// semilhante 'similar' (L/PC, 6)		sumanas// semanas 'weeks' (L/BC, 90)
i		deferença// diferença 'difference' (L/FL, 34)				
o	saluçando// soluçando 'sobbing' (L/CA, 98)	prepósito// propósito 'purpose' (L/CA, 100)		pissuir//possuir 'possess' (L/CA, 101)		jugar//jogar/'to play' (L/TM, 17)
u					sojeito //sujeito 'an individual' (L/CL, 19)	

Figure 2. Simplified verb paradigm in Brazilian Portuguese. Vernacular forms in bold; others are shared.

Persons	Present			Preterite			Imperfect		
eu	falo	bebo	parto	falei	bebi	parti	falava	bebia	partia
tu*	falas fala	bebes bebe	partes parte	falaste falô	bebeste bebeu	partiste partiu	falavas falava	bebias bebia	partias partia
você/ ele/ela	fala	bebe	parte	falou falô	bebeu	partiu	falava	bebia	partia
nós	falamos falemo fala	bebemos bebemo bebe	partimos partimo parte	falamos falemo falô	bebemos bebemo bebeu	partimos partimo partiu	falávamos falava	bebíamos bebia	partíamos partia
vocês/ eles/ela	falam fala	bebem bebe	partem parte	falaram falaro falô	beberam bebero bebeu	partiram partiro partiu	falavam falava	bebiám bebia	partiam partia

*Tu occurs in a few regions of Brazil only.

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