

# Varia-Idade in Rio de Janeiro – Communication and Generation: Linguistic and Discursive Strategies Among Older People

Varia-Idade no Rio de Janeiro – Comunicação e geração: Estratégias linguísticas e discursivas na idade maior



UNIVERSITÄT HEIDELBERG  
ZUKUNFT SEIT 1386

- Binational research project between Heidelberg University and Rio de Janeiro State University
- Project coordinators: Prof. Dr. Sybille Große, Romanisches Seminar, Universität Heidelberg: sybille.grosse@rose.uni-heidelberg.de  
Prof. Dr. Maria Teresa Tedesco Vilardo, Instituto de Letras, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro: teresatedesco@uol.com.br  
Site: www.uni-heidelberg.de/rose/varia-idade/index.html

## Background

### Previous studies

- Previous studies and corpora focus on the spoken language of educated speakers of Brazilian Portuguese (cf. the NURC project [*Norma Urbana Culta*])
- Preti (1991), for example, highlights the partial deficiency of the language of older people

Dino Preti (1991)

### Discursive and conversational level

- Low density of information in the discourse;
- Constant use of presumptions;
- Many occurrences of repetitions (auto-repetitions and hetero-repetitions);
- Bipartite topical structure around a double reality (the past and the present);
- Frequent stereotypes of aging;
- Valorization of the past.

### Scientific interests

- Study of the language and the communicative behavior of older people that belong to different social classes
- Discourse on the perception of the changes in daily life and in the urban space within the last decades
- **Interdisciplinarity:** linguistics, urban geography, sociology, history, urban anthropology, cultural studies

## Method

### The interview

- Familiar setting
- Semi-structured interview
- Conversation about life and individual experiences in Rio de Janeiro
- Protocol and consent of all recorded speakers

### Required profile of the participants

- Age: 60+
- Geographical origins: State of Rio de Janeiro
- Residing in Rio de Janeiro for more than 40 years
- **Spatial, social and educational diversity**
- No or minimal bodily and cognitive restriction

Protocol with metadata

Declaration of consent

## Data

- 71 interviews executed (03/2016 - 04/2018)
- ~ 57h / 3375 minutes of recordings
- 43 different city districts
- Speakers: 77 of which 49 women and 28 men
- **Diverse educational and socioeconomic backgrounds** of the participants



Map of Rio de Janeiro and its districts

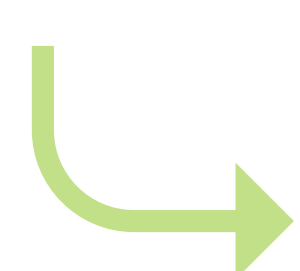
Age group	Women	Men	Total
60-69	35	13	48
70-79	9	11	20
80-89	4	3	7
90-99	1	1	2
		Total	77

Age profile of the participants

## Transcription & Tools

### f4transkript

- Orthographically based transcription according to guidelines of a transcription guide, e.g.:
  - Use of lowercase with some exceptions
  - No use of punctuation
  - Pauses, emphasis, non-linguistic features are mostly observed
  - Non-realized sounds or syllables are written in { }
  - Reconstructed or incomprehensible sounds, syllables or words are written in ( )
- Participants and personal names are anonymized



Two transcripts of one interview are being created: a normalized and a detailed transcription

### Example of a transcript: man, aged 69, higher education, Rio Comprido

```

EMB: 00:01:14 bom qual seria a coisa mais estranha que aconteceu no seu bairro?
M69RC: 00:01:14 no meu bairro?
EMB: 00:01:14 hum onde vive ou hoje ou antigamente [uma curiosidade]
M69RC: 00:01:14 [eu eu] morava aqui e deu uma invasão num hotel ai dos
traficantes (-) e e isso foi na/ justamente aond/ perto de onde
eu morava (-) a minha empregada ficou maluca porque viu o
traficante cruzar perto da porta do prédio
EMB: 00:01:14 então são coisas [de segurança]
M69RC: 00:01:14 [é de violência]
EMB: 00:01:14 da violência bom há talvez uma última pergunta é uma pergunta que
tem a ver com a história do Brasil como foi como você se sentiu
durante a revolução militar no Brasil?
M69RC: 00:01:14 bEM num devia nada não era comunista estudava (-) não tinha (-)
vínculo com com com ass/ com grupos contrários ou a favor do
regime eu estudava minha família trabalhava não tinha por exemplo
pra mim acho até que foi/ tô sentindo falta (-) foi q/ a época
que mais se viveu melOr nesse Brasil mais o Brasil cresceu se
você olhar no/ depois da: quando voltou a demo/ a/ pra mim é uma
anarquia não é democracia isso tá uma zona é é você não tem uma
obra de vulto uma obra importante que tenha sido feita por
qualquer governo democrático tudo que cê tem de de hidroelétricas
de sistemas importantes pra pra vida do/ no/ Bra/ do povo (-) foi
feita durante o regime militar (-) nós tamos hoje não temos
acionamento de luz essas coisas [...]
```

### f4analyse / MAXQDA

- For qualitative analysis

### Annotation

- Syntactic and morphological tagging for linguistic analysis
- Tagging of the interviews with content-related keywords to allow researchers of other disciplines to use the corpus

## Some results & perspectives

### Analysis parameter



- Information structure
- Use of discursive markers like *oi, né, entende, entendeu*
- Topicality of the narrative structures
- Discursive coherence in the interviews: activated *semantic frames* in the discursive process
- Perception of the urban fractures and the linguistic dynamics in the urban space of Rio de Janeiro
- Stereotypes in the discourse:
  - Analysis carried out from in a transdisciplinary perspective (social psychology, cognitive linguistic, conversation analysis)
  - What linguistic means are used to express stereotypes?

### Some preliminary findings

#### On a linguistic level

- The language used by all interlocutors contains features of 'language of proximity' (*Nähesprache*), regardless of their level of education
- Some interlocutors recognize inhabitants of "favelas" by their language use
- The interlocutors are aware that their diatopic variety differs from other varieties in Brazil

#### On a content level

- (important for interdisciplinary studies):
- The quality of life has decreased
  - Increase of violence
  - Some inhabitants hold prejudice against other Brazilians coming from other parts of Brazil, especially from the north-east of the country
  - Some interlocutors would never go into a "favela" even though they are living next-door

### Creation of an online data base

- On a user-friendly online platform, the audio files of the interviews, their transcriptions, as well as the historical background of every city district should enable multimodal and multidisciplinary access

### Sustainable data

- The whole corpus will be accessible online. Thus, it is very important to keep the data in file formats which are easy to edit and to convert

