

## Attendees as Agents: the special transitive meaning in Brazilian Portuguese

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Extension of the transitive semantics is common in many languages. Take for instance events such as 'see' and 'love', in which participants are not prototypically agentive nor there is an affected entity in any way, but the event is still construed as transitive, being linguistically expressed by a transitive argument structure construction. Brazilian Portuguese (BP) is no exception. In addition to that common extension, BP also expresses complex events such as 'getting a hair cut' as simple causatives (Shibatani, 1976), packaging the rich and detailed series of events contained in this usual activity as a conventionalized scenario (Goldberg, 1995). This kind of extension yields instances such as 'eu cortei o cabelo' (literally I cut the hair), which is translated as I had my hair cut. While this kind of extension is very productive in BP, as many other events falling into the rich frame of provision of services (Ciríaco, 2015; Santos et al, 2019; Maciel et al, 2022) are expressed as simple transitive constructions, this use is not unusual across languages - in English for example it's possible to say 'I remodeled my house' when I actually hired someone to do the remodel. However, what is surprising about the transitive semantics in BP is the recent use of verbs such as 'casar' (marry) in a rare, special transitive meaning in which the participant in subject position isn't actually getting married, nor is making the participant in object position do (which is also a possible extension in BP), but plays no part in the ceremony except for attending - or, in other words, is just an attendee, as illustrated by the following examples, both taken from the NOW *corpus* (Davies, 2016-):

- i) "Bora para São Paulo casar uns amigos[...], disse o cantor, que mora em Belo Horizonte (MG)."  
Go to São Paulo marry some friends[...], said the singer, who lives in Belo Horizonte (MG).  
Let's go to São Paulo to marry some friends[...], said the singer, who lives in Belo Horizonte (MG);
- ii) "A vendedora Helaine [...] ainda lembra do dia 4 de dezembro de 2016, em que casaria a cunhada Rosemeire [...]"  
The saleswoman Helaine [...] still remembers prep+the day 4 of December of 2016, in which marry+future the sister-in-law Rosemeire [...].  
The saleswoman Helaine [...] still remembers the 4th of December of 2016, in which she would marry her sister-in-law Rosemeire [...].

In face of those kind of instances, we ask what motivates this new use of the transitive construction in BP, which occurs without any clear indication whatsoever, and how this semantic extension of the transitive prototype can be accounted for, particularly in relation to the other common usages. We argue that a usage-based constructionist approach (Kemmer and Barlow, 2000; Croft and Cruse, 2004; Goldberg, 2006, 2013, 2019) is required for accounting for the properties of this special transitive meaning, and that once its communicative function is recognized all of its properties unfold without having to resort to any grammatical principles or stipulations. Based on data collected from both historical and recent *corpora* (Davies and Ferreira, 2006-; Davies, 2016-), as well as social media posts (Ciríaco et al, 2022), we claim that the special meaning's function is to inform that people care about certain socially and culturally rich events to the point of wanting to be present and witnessing it. Hence, the special meaning construction enables language users to give prominence to the attendee, who appears as the subject, in order to express that function. Although the attendee has no agentive part in the social event, s/he cares for the people involved, and is willing to express her/his support by coming to it. Therefore, properties such as the non-agentivity of the participant appearing in subject position, and the non-finite verb forms used, which, as data shows, are preferred over tensed ones, follow from the special meaning's function, both indicating lower clause transitivity (cf. Hopper and Thompson, 1980) as compared to the prototypical transitive construction's meaning.

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