

# Differences and similarities between European and Brazilian Portuguese in the use of the «gerúndio»

TELMO MÓIA  
EVANI VIOTTI

## Abstract

*This paper provides a partial description of the main differences between European Portuguese (EP) and Brazilian Portuguese (BP) concerning the use of the «gerúndio». Two rather distinct syntactic and semantic uses of this verb form are focussed: the periphrastic «gerúndio» and the adverbial «gerúndio». The periphrastic «gerúndio» occurs in combination with auxiliary verbs, forming complex sequences of two verbal elements. In modern EP, it tends to fall into disuse after some auxiliary verbs, the uninflected infinitive (preceded by a preposition) emerging instead. This paper identifies and briefly characterises the contexts where this competition «gerúndio»-infinitive takes place. The second kind of «gerúndio» occurs in adverbial clauses, where it may be associated with a wide spectrum of interpositional semantic values, like cause, result or mood, just to name a few. After a brief semantic characterisation of the adverbial «gerúndio», the main differences between EP and BP involving its use will be described. Among them, those concerning the use of gerundive clauses preceded by the preposition *em* and, once again, those involving the competition «gerúndio»-infinitive, stand out.*

## 1. Introduction

This paper provides a partial description of the main differences between European Portuguese (EP) and Brazilian Portuguese (BP) concerning the use of the «gerúndio», focussing on two of the main uses of this verb form: the *periphrastic «gerúndio»* and the *adverbial «gerúndio»*. As will be seen, the grammars of these two forms of the «gerúndio» are substantially different,

and the variation between EP and BP in regard to their application is likewise rather distinct.

The structure of the paper is as follows: in section 2, we present a brief review of the basic syntactic and semantic facts about the Portuguese «gerúndio»; in sections 3 and 4, we focus on the different preferences exhibited by EP and BP with respect to the periphrastic and the adverbial «gerúndio», respectively; finally, in section 5, we conclude by highlighting the similarities and differences in the use of the «gerúndio» in the two varieties of Portuguese under examination; among the differences, the tendency, in (at least some varieties of) EP, to avoid the use of the «gerúndio» in some specific contexts, of very high frequency, is certainly prominent.

The data used in this paper is taken basically from two corpora: for European Portuguese, the corpus **Natura-Público** (henceforth, NP), which contains ca. 6.3 million words, taken exclusively from a recent Portuguese newspaper; for Brazilian Portuguese, the corpus **NILC-São Carlos** (henceforth, NILC), which contains ca. 32 million words, 85% of which taken from Brazilian newspapers, and the rest from other sorts of texts. Unless otherwise stated, all quantitative data provided here is taken from these two corpora. In section 4.2, we will use some data from literary texts, taken from the corpus **Clássicos da Literatura Portuguesa / Porto Editora v. 1.6** (henceforth, CLP)<sup>1</sup>. Given obvious space constraints, texts from the corpora will not be translated, although the relevant expressions are discussed within the text and highlighted in the excerpts.

## 2. Basic syntactic and semantic facts about the «gerúndio»

Portuguese «gerúndio» is an invariable verb form<sup>2</sup> identified by the suffix *-ndo* – *amando* (“loving”), *bebendo* (“drinking”), *dormindo* (“sleeping”) – which often (though not always) corresponds to English *-ing* forms. It may occur in different syntactic environments and, as will be shown in detail in section 4.1 below, it may be associated with various semantic values. Taking into account the syntactic environments in which it may appear, at least **five subtypes of «gerúndio»** need be distinguished.

### i. INDEPENDENT «GERÚNDIO»

Exceptionally, the Portuguese «gerúndio» may occur in non-embedded sentences, as in some imperatives – (1) – or in image captions – (2) –, for instance:

- (1) **Andando** já para casa!  
walking already to house  
‘Go home immediately!’

<sup>1</sup> All three mentioned *corpora* are accessible at <http://acdc.linguatca.pt/acesso/>.

<sup>2</sup> In some Portuguese dialects, the «gerúndio» may vary in number and person.

- (2) Mulheres **vendendo** tapetes no mercado [PHOTOGRAPH CAPTION]  
women selling rugs in-the market  
'Women selling rugs in the market'

ii. ARGUMENTAL «GERÚNDIO»

The «gerúndio» may also be associated with the main verb of sentential arguments of higher predicates, like the verb *ver* ("see") or a noun like *situação* ("situation"), in the examples below.

- (3) A Ana viu [um bicho estranho **escavando** a terra].  
the Ana saw an animal weird digging the earth  
'Ana saw a weird animal digging the soil.'
- (4) [Aves **chocando** contra aviões] não é uma situação rara.  
birds crashing against airplanes NEG is a situation rare  
'Birds crashing into airplanes is not a rare situation.'

iii. PERIPHRASTIC «GERÚNDIO»

In one of its most common uses, the «gerúndio» co-occurs with (so-called) auxiliary verbs – typically aspectual verbs, like *estar* ("be"), *continuar* ("continue") or *vir* ("come")<sup>3</sup> –, forming complex sequences of two verbal elements, as illustrated in (5)-(6). Traditionally, (at least some of) these verbal sequences are referred to as the «periphrastic conjugation» of the verb. By the way, notice that our use of the term «periphrastic» to refer to this subtype of «gerúndio» is merely a simplification, since the «gerúndio» itself, separately considered, is obviously not periphrastic.

- (5) O país está **mudando**.  
the country is changing  
'The country is changing.'
- (6) Já há muito tempo que eu venho **dizendo** isso.  
already there-is much time that I come saying that  
'I have been saying that for a long time.'

This subtype of «gerúndio» will be dealt with separately in section 3.

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<sup>3</sup> Under an analysis of aspectual verbs as raising verbs, the periphrastic «gerúndio» is associated with the main verb of the sentential argument of the aspectual verb, as schematised below, and can thus be considered a syntactic subtype of the *argumental «gerúndio»*:

(i) [o país]<sub>i</sub> está [GERUNDIVE CLAUSE []]<sub>i</sub> mudando]

**iv. ADNOMINAL «GERÚNDIO»**

Sometimes, the «gerúndio» is associated with the main verb of (sentential) noun modifiers – (7) – or noun appositives – (8). Many traditional grammarians have condemned this form (especially in noun modifiers<sup>4</sup>), but its use is widespread.

- (7) Foram encontradas várias caixas **contendo** documentos secretos.  
were found several boxes containing documents secret  
'Several boxes containing secret documents were found.'
- (8) O timbre da sua voz, **fazendo** lembrar Maria Callas, é impressionante.  
the timbre of-the her voice, making remember Maria Callas, is impressive  
'The timbre of her voice, which calls to mind Maria Callas, is impressive.'

**v. ADVERBIAL «GERÚNDIO»**

In one of its most common uses, the «gerúndio» is associated with the main verb of sentential clauses occurring in adverbial position. The adverbial «gerúndio» may be associated with various semantic values, like manner – (9) – and result – (10) –, for instance.

- (9) A Ana abraçou o Rui, **apertando**-o fortemente contra o peito.  
the Ana hugged the Rui, squeezing-him strongly against the chest  
'Ana hugged Rui, squeezing him strongly against her chest.'
- (10) A Ana cortou a meta em primeiro lugar, **recebendo** o prémio de mil euros.  
the Ana crossed the finishing-line in first place, receiving the prize of thousand euros  
'Ana crossed the finishing line first, (thus) receiving the one thousand euros prize.'

From a semantic point of view, the adverbial «gerúndio» appears to be rather distinct from the other forms of «gerúndio». In fact, whereas the issues raised by those other forms seem to be predominantly syntactic or lexical-syntactic, the analysis of the structures with the adverbial «gerúndio» centrally involves the semantics of interpropositional connections, e. g. temporal, mereological, causal, instrumental, conditional or contrastive

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<sup>4</sup> Cf., e. g., Mendes de Almeida, *Gramática Metódica da Língua Portuguesa*, 44.<sup>a</sup> edição, 1999, Editora Saraiva, São Paulo, Brasil, pp. 559-560.

dependencies. The adverbial «gerúndio» will be dealt with separately in section 4.

One of the most notorious differences between BP and modern EP – at least as spoken nowadays in the Lisbon area<sup>5</sup> – is that the latter resorts to infinitival forms, normally preceded by the preposition *a* (or *por*, in some cases), in many contexts in which the latter uses gerundive forms. This difference has been discussed by many authors, like, recently, Borges Neto & Foltran (2001). The preference for prepositioned infinitival structures in modern EP affects all five types of «gerúndio» identified above. We will only consider cases with the periphrastic and the adverbial «gerúndio» in this paper, but the other three cases are illustrated below, in (11), where the sequences with prepositioned infinitive – common in EP, but not in BP – are equivalent to those with the independent, the argumental and the adnominal «gerúndio», respectively:

- (11) a. Mulheres **a vender** tapetes no mercado [PHOTOGRAPH CAPTION]  
[equivalent to (2); structure more common in EP]  
b. A Ana viu um bicho estranho **a escavar** a terra.  
[equivalent to (3); structure more common in EP]  
c. O timbre da sua voz, **a fazer** lembrar Maria Callas, é impressionante.  
[equivalent to (8); structure more common in EP]

It must be stressed that not all instances of the «gerúndio» are at free variance with prepositioned infinitives in EP, though. For instance, sentence (7), unlike (8), cannot occur with the infinitive (possibly due to the same aspectual restrictions that limit the use of the adverbial «gerúndio» – cf. section 4.2 below). In this paper, we will explore this issue only partially, as regards the periphrastic «gerúndio» – in the next section – and the adverbial «gerúndio» – in section 4.

### 3. Periphrastic «gerúndio»

Let us, for the sake of illustration of the competition «gerúndio»-infinitive with auxiliary verbs, consider the verb *ESTAR*, roughly equivalent to the English verb *to be* in progressive forms. The following two sentences are

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<sup>5</sup> In some areas of Portugal (e. g. the Alentejo and the Algarve), the use of the «gerúndio» in the relevant type of contexts is very common. Also, many classical Portuguese authors, like Júlio Dinis, Eça de Queirós or Camilo Castelo Branco, widely use the «gerúndio» in structures where modern standard EP prefers the infinitive: “O tempo de cavaquear um bocado com o Absoluto, (...) e ver o que **estão fazendo** as miosótis junto à meiga Fonte dos Amores...” (Eça de Queirós, *Os Maias*, in CLP). For the sake of simplicity, we will ignore dialectal and/or historical variance henceforth.

equivalent and equally grammatical, but the first is preferably used by Brazilian speakers and the second by modern Portuguese speakers:

- (12) a. O país está **mudando**. [more common in BP]  
 the country is changing  
 b. O país está **a mudar**. [more common in modern EP]  
 the country is to change

The frequency figures in the EP and the BP corpora are unmistakable: the EP corpus contains 4231 occurrences of the sequence *estar a* INF and 27 of *estar* GER (less than 1 %); the BP corpus contains 152 and 36964 (more than 99 %), respectively. These are two examples:

- (13) a. “A falta de água **está a agravar** a situação sanitária, que já era deplorável” (NP, par 79053) [EP]  
 b. “(...) o atraso do plantio de feijão **está agravando** o desemprego no campo.” (NILC, par Agrofolha-94a-agr-2) [BP]

Many other auxiliary verbs or complex predicative expressions – though not all, as we will see later on – show a similar tendency, viz. **a predominant use of the infinitive in EP and of the «gerúndio» in BP**. Among the most common ones, we mention the following four:

**i. ANDAR** (literally: “walk”), semantically similar to *estar*, but often associated with an habitual value:

- (14) a. “Há quem **ande a pensar** montar uns bares e uma discoteca no Castelo de Ourém (...)” (NP, par 30620) [EP]  
 b. “(...) eu próprio fiz uma instalação e **andei pensando** em me habilitar à Bienal. (NILC, par Opinião-94a-opi-2) [BP]

**ii. FICAR** (literally: “stay”), when it indicates a transition to a new state-of-affairs:

- (15) a. “**Fica a conhecer** um dos mais originais ficcionistas portugueses do século XX.” (NP, par 59971) [EP]  
 b. “É no Carnaval que a gente **fica conhecendo** o Brasil.” (NILC, par Ilustrada-94b-nd-1) [BP]

**iii. PASSAR A VIDA** (literally: “pass the life”), a relatively informal complex predicate that indicates constant iteration:

- (16) a. “Totó, o nosso herói, **passa a vida a remoer** a sua desgraça (...)” (NP, par 30625) [EP]

- b. “Cigano é um povo que **passa a vida viajando** e é chamado de nômade.” (NILC, par Folhinha-94b-soc-1) [BP]

**iv. COMEÇAR** (literally: “start”), when it indicates the first of a series of events (rather than the beginning of a given situation<sup>6</sup>), in which case the preposition preceding the infinitive is *por*; in this particular case, the sequence with the infinitive does not seem so rare in BP as in the previous three cases (the relevant sequence occurring a few dozen times in the BP corpus).

- (17) a. “Os trabalhadores **começaram por reivindicar** 12 por cento de aumentos, mas baixaram depois para 11 por cento (...).” (NP, par 57473) [EP]  
 b. “A imprensa **começou nomeando** José Serra, desistiu dele e escolheu Edmar Bacha, substituiu-o por Pedro Malan e agora entrega o cargo a Clóvis Carvalho.” (NILC, par Dinheiro-94a-eco-1) [BP]

The overall picture of the «gerúndio»-infinitive competition with auxiliary verbs in EP and BP is, however, more complex than the mere consideration of this bunch of verbs might suggest. Other cases, where the above mentioned tendencies for the use of the «gerúndio» or the infinitive are different, need to be considered.

First, we consider the case where **the «gerúndio» and the infinitive are more or less at free variance in BP** (while the preference for infinitive holds in EP). This happens with at least two verbs<sup>7</sup>:

**i. CONTINUAR** (literally: “continue”)

- (18) a. “Portugal deve **continuar a defender** a aplicação das resoluções internacionais (...).” (NP, par 54755) [EP]  
 b. “A assessoria de Fernando Henrique (...) afirmou que o candidato **continua a defender** as mesmas propostas.” (NILC, par Brasil-94b-pol-2) [BP]  
 b’. “Hamlet, apesar da prova obtida (...), **continua hesitando**.” (NILC, par Mais-94a-nd-2) [BP]

<sup>6</sup> There are at least two distinct forms of the auxiliary verb *começar* (cf. e. g. Dascal, 1982): (i) one that identifies the first of a series of events, as in (17) – cf. *começou por ler* (“started by read<sub>INF</sub>”) / *começou lendo* (“started reading”); (ii) one that identifies the beginning of a given situation, as in (25) below – cf. *começou a ler* (“started to read<sub>INF</sub>”). As can be seen, the two verbs are normally distinguished by the form of their complement.

<sup>7</sup> The form of the verb *começar* illustrated in (17) is a borderline case, since the BP corpus contains several instances of its use with the infinitive (preceded by *por*), but its combination with the «gerúndio» is overwhelmingly more common.

ii. **ACABAR** (literally: “end”), when it indicates the last of a series of events (rather than the end of a given situation<sup>8</sup>), in which case the preposition preceding the infinitive is *por*:

- (19) a. “«t-shirts» vendidas ao quilo numa feira **acabaram por provocar** uma cena rocambolesca (...)” (NP, par 19884) [EP]  
 b. “Como os linfomas afetam o sistema imunológico (...), a queda de resistência do organismo **acaba por provocar** a morte do doente.” (NILC, par Mundo-94b-pol-1) [BP]  
 b’. “Esta substância impermeabiliza as células e **acaba provocando** a sua morte.” (NILC, par 593) [BP]

In the Brazilian NILC corpus, there are 3951 occurrences of the sequence *continuar* + GER versus 1401 of *continuar* + a INF; the sequence *acabar* + *por* INF occurs 342 times in the same corpus.

Secondly, there is the case where **the «gerúndio» and the infinitive are both common in EP** (while BP normally only resorts to the «gerúndio»). This happens at least with the verb *VIR* (“come”), which indicates gradual change in time of the relevant state-of-affairs. The use of this auxiliary verb reveals some idiosyncrasies, with differences arising from the use of the simple *vs.* the compound forms (unnoticed in the literature, to our knowledge).

In structures with the simple forms of the auxiliary verb *vir*, EP clearly favours the use of the «gerúndio» (though a few instances with the infinitive – slightly odd to some EP speakers – are registered in the corpus); BP only uses the «gerúndio»:

- (20) a. “Briosa e Gala (...) destacou (...) o trabalho que o Esgueira **vem desenvolvendo**, na formação desportiva dos jovens da cidade.” (NP, par 22377) [EP]  
 a’. “(...) está em preparação um diploma que discriminaliza os cheques sem cobertura em certas circunstâncias, pois uma revisão de tal matéria **vem a ser** insistentemente pedida” (NP, par 6382) [EP]  
 b. “O Institut des Textes et Manuscrits de Paris **vem desenvolvendo** um trabalho exemplar nessa direção” (NILC, par 48174) [BP]

<sup>8</sup> There are at least three distinct forms of the auxiliary verb *acabar* (cf. e. g. Dascal, 1982): (i) one that identifies the last of a series of events, as in (19) – cf. *acabou por ler* (“ended by read<sub>INF</sub>”) / *acabou lendo* (“ended reading”); (ii) another that identifies the end of a given situation – cf. *acabou de ler* (“ended to read<sub>INF</sub>”, equivalent to *finished reading*); and (iii) still another that refers to the moment immediately following some event – cf. *acabou de ler* (“ended to read<sub>INF</sub>”, equivalent to *has just read*). As can be seen, the first verb is normally distinguished by the form of its complement, and the second and the third often give rise to ambiguity.



Structures with a compound form of the auxiliary verb *vir – ter vindo* (literally: “have come”) – are very common in EP. They occur only with the prepositioned infinitive (*ter vindo a* INF) and are roughly equivalent to the simpler forms with *vir* (*vir* GER)<sup>9</sup>. The sequence *ter vindo a* INF is not used in BP (only 2 occurrences in the NILC corpus), but, in EP, it is absolutely predominant in oral speech, and more common than *vir* GER – which is felt as slightly formal or literary – in the written journalistic discourse. The following sequences are thus typical of EP:

- (21) “O rápido agravamento da situação naquela zona não é surpresa para quem ao longo dos anos **tem vindo a acompanhar** o que se passa no Corno de África (...)” (NP, par 62613) [EP]  
 “A procura destes títulos **tem vindo a acentuar-se**, ao mesmo tempo que a oferta se retrai.” (NP, par 911) [EP]  
 “Desde essa ocasião que o suspeito **tinha vindo a ser** persistentemente procurado pelas autoridades em todo o país (...)” (NP, par 74375) [EP]

Thirdly, one must consider the cases where no differences are noticed between EP and BP, since both dialects systematically use either only the «gerúndio» or only the prepositioned infinitive. Among the verbs that **only occur with the «gerúndio» in both EP and BP**, we mention the following two:

**i. IR** (literally: “go”) expressing gradual change in time:

- (22) “Todas as gerações passam por esse conflito, e a forma como é resolvido influencia a personalidade que se **vai moldando**.” (NP, par 5102) [EP]  
 “Ele **vai moldando** a imagem de um político estável, capaz de enfrentar e superar crises pessoais.” (NILC, par Opinião-94<sup>a</sup>-opi-1) [BP]

**ii.** a homonym of the previous verb which expresses the non-occurrence (in the past) of an imminent situation; in this case, the meaning of the verb roughly corresponds to the meaning of the adverb *almost*:

- (23) “Mas foi precisamente neste jogo que **ia acontecendo** a surpresa do dia, quando o espanhol obrigou o ucraniano à disputa de um terceiro «set».” (NP, par 53691) [EP]

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<sup>9</sup> The fact that *ter vindo* + GER is not used in Portuguese is possibly due to cacophony (given the repetitive sequence *-ndo -ndo*). Note, however, that the two forms are morphologically distinct: the first is a past participle (whose final section has, accidentally, an «-ndo» form) whereas the second is a true «gerúndio».

“Quanto ao caso em si, que já **ia ficando esquecido** aqui, o cubano Zappa acha que os pilotos exageraram” (NILC, par 15128) [BP]

Among the auxiliary verbs that **only occur with the prepositioned infinitive in both EP and BP**, we present the following six:

**i. VIR [A]** (literally: “come [to]”), when it acts as a temporal auxiliary expressing posteriority (i. e. when it forms periphrastic sequences equivalent to a future tense):

- (24) “O primeiro-ministro (...) excluiu há dias a possibilidade de **vir a remodelar** o seu Governo.” (NP, par 51398) [EP]  
 “Se ele falha, a produção de leptina é alterada e, assim, a pessoa pode **vir a engordar**.” (NILC, par 135148) [BP]

**ii. COMEÇAR [A]** (literally: “start [to]”), when it refers to the beginning of a given situation (rather than to the first of a series of situations), i. e. when it acts as a situation reducer, in the terms of Peres (1993) – cf. fn. 6:

- (25) “ao fim da tarde, quando o frio **começa a queimar** as mãos” (NP, par 57870) [EP]  
 “Em quinze minutos **começa a queimar**, fica caramelado e aí você joga uma xícara de creme de leite por cima (...).” (NILC, par Ilustrada-94b-nd-1) [BP]

**iii. CHEGAR [A]** (literally: “arrive [to]”), when indicating that some situation occurred (possibly unexpectedly) at the end of a series of (often implicit) events:

- (26) “O matador português Vítor Mendes confessa (...) ter sentido tantas dificuldades de adaptação ao mundo da tourada em Espanha que **chegou a pensar** retirar-se.” (NP, par 45293) [EP]  
 “Mas o presidente **chegou a pensar** em desistir da reeleição.” (NILC, par 27800) [BP]

**iv. VOLTAR / TORNAR [A]** (literally: “turn [to]”), when indicating simple iteration (roughly corresponding to the meaning of the adverb *again*):

- (27) “Portugal não pode **voltar a errar** em África.” (NP, par 46271) [EP]  
 “Aos 21min, porém, a defesa **voltou a falhar**.” (NILC, par Esporte-94b-des-2) [BP]

- (28) “**Tornaram a casar** em 1989, quando ambos já eram famosos.”  
(NP, par 68968) [EP]  
“Quando se achou viúvo (...), não pensou em **tornar a casar** (...).”  
(NILC, par 120090) [BP]

v. **PASSAR** [A] (literally: “pass [to]”), when indicating a transition to a new (often stative or habitual) state-of-affairs:

- (29) “Com a admissão da Geórgia, todos os Estados que surgiram do desmembramento da URSS **passam a estar** representados na CSCE.” (NP, par 32254) [EP]  
“São Paulo **passa a estar** conectada às capitais nordestinas (...) na primeira quinzena de março.” (NILC, par Cotidiano-94b-soc-3) [BP]

vi. **PÔR-SE** [A] (literally: “put-oneself [to]”), when indicating a transition to a new state-of-affairs, where something repeatedly happens:

- (30) “Ultimamente, (...) até os pragmáticos PSD e PS (...) **se puseram a chorar** sobre os valores patrióticos derramados...” (NP, par 70553) [EP]  
“Pepeu parecia ainda mais franzino, a palidez se acentuara, (...) dava lástima, Bóris temia que **se pusesse a chorar**.” (NILC, par Mais-94a-nd-2) [BP]

Furthermore, it must be noticed that the auxiliary verbs that select the preposition *de* – e. g. *deixar de*, *parar de*, *cessar de*, *acabar de*, *terminar de* (cf. English *to quit*, *to stop*, *to cease*, *to finish*) – only occur with the infinitive both in EP and BP.

As far as we can see from the description just made, there seems to be no clear semantic regularity in the distribution of the periphrastic «gerúndio» and the competing infinitive form, in Portuguese, since auxiliary verbs of the same semantic and syntactic family seem to behave differently.

So far, we have only considered the competition «gerúndio»-infinitive, the phenomenon that undoubtedly evinces the most striking differences between EP and BP with respect to the use of the periphrastic «gerúndio». However, other differences exist between the two varieties, in the domain under analysis. More specifically, some forms or structures seem to be found only – or essentially – in one of them. Let us start by considering the **forms or structures that are typical of BP**.

i. the auxiliary aspectual verb **VIVER** (literally: “live”)

BP uses the auxiliary verb *viver*, normally with the «gerúndio» (only 10 occurrences with the prepositioned infinitive in the NILC corpus), to express

the constant iteration of a given situation (cf. Neves, 1999: 63). This verb is roughly equivalent to the complex predicate *passar a vida* that was considered in (16) above. EP does not use the auxiliary verb *viver*, whence the following sequences are typical of BP:

- (31) a. “A atual diretoria já deixou Aílton ir embora (...) e **vive afirmando** não ter dinheiro.” (NILC, par 26662) [BP]  
 “Seus donos são dois irmãos que **vivem brigando** e não param de comer.” (NILC, par Folhinha-94b-soc-1) [BP]  
 “Colin é tido por doente, **vive chorando**, encerrado dentro do quarto por uma rigorosa governanta.” (NILC, par Ilustrada-94b-nd-1) [BP]
- b. “**Viviam a captar** no céu presságios horripilantes como pragas, pestes, guerras e moléstias afins.” (NILC, par Mais -94a-nd-1) [BP]

ii. the auxiliary verb *TERMINAR* (literally: “end”) with «gerúndio» or infinitive preceded by *por*<sup>10</sup>

The value of the auxiliary verb *terminar* in question is equivalent to that of the verb *acabar* illustrated in (19). This verb is relatively common in BP, where it is used – just like *acabar* – both with the «gerúndio» and with the infinitive preceded by the preposition *por* (albeit the combination with the «gerúndio» is more common). In modern EP, the use of this verb *terminar* is very uncommon (no more than 2 occurrences of the relevant sequence *terminar* GER in the NP corpus, and no register of *terminar por* INF<sup>11</sup>). The following sequences are thus relatively unlikely to be uttered or written by an EP speaker, who would normally resort to the equivalent verb *acabar*:

- (32) a. “O resultado prático é que cada um **termina comprando** aquilo que já desejava antes.” (NILC, par 109793) [BP]  
 “Venenos **terminam sendo** detectados.” (NILC, par Ilustrada-94b-nd-2) [BP]
- b. “Eu não falava uma palavra de português, mas um rapaz brasileiro **terminou por entender** o que eu queria, e levou-me até ao hotel.” (NILC, par 109894) [BP]

<sup>10</sup> There are at least two distinct forms of the auxiliary verb *terminar*, parallel to the forms (i) and (ii) of the verb *acabar* mentioned in fn. 8. We consider here only the form parallel to (i), which indicates the last of a series of events.

<sup>11</sup> However, the form is often registered in classical Portuguese authors: “E, todavia, Afonso **terminou por** lhe descobrir um encanto íntimo.” (Eça de Queirós, *Os Maias*, in CLP).

- c. “Começou a esquentar o casulo com seu hálito; a borboleta **terminou saindo**, mas suas asas ainda estavam presas, e **terminou por morrer** pouco tempo depois.” (NILC, par 109803) [BP]

iii. the structure *estar* GER, where the «gerúndio» is applied to stative predicates like *saber* (“know”) or *poder* (“can” / “may”)

- (33) “Quem não assistiu à cerimônia (...) não **está sabendo**: Cleveland Cavaliers e Sacramento Kings estão de distintivo novo.” (NILC, par Esporte-94a-des-3) [BP]  
“Durante esta semana, o público em Bauru **está podendo** ver apresentações de balé e teatro.” (NILC, par Cotidiano-94a-soc-1) [BP]

As is well known, the possibility of combining the verb *estar* with stative descriptions is highly restricted in Portuguese (cf. e. g. Cunha, 1998; Pessoa, 2000; Peres, 2003), the restrictions being, to some extent, similar to those applying in English to the progressive forms. BP, however, seems to impose less constraints than EP, judging by sequences like (33), which sound definitely odd to EP speakers. We will not further elaborate on this issue, which is complex and exceeds by far the scope of the present paper.

iv. the structure *estar* GER, where the auxiliary verb typically occurs in a periphrastic future form – *ir estar* (“go be<sub>INF</sub>”) – and the whole structure carries an implicature of low commitment of an entity – typically the speaker – with the occurrence of a given state-of-affairs:

- (34) Eu **vou estar resolvendo** o seu problema ainda hoje. [BP]  
“I go be solving the your problem still today”  
I will solve your problem today.

Structures like these, studied in Viotti & Scher (2001), occur essentially in informal (non-standard) BP. As said, they have a special pragmatic effect, somehow implying that the speaker does not whole-heartedly commit himself to bringing about the mentioned state-of-affairs. The sequence is roughly equivalent to the following (standard) form, without the auxiliary *estar*, which, however, does not carry the non-committal implicature:

- (35) Eu **vou resolver** o seu problema ainda hoje.  
“I go solve the your problem still today”

Let us now turn to the structures that are typical of EP.

**i.** the structure *ir* GER, where the verb *ir* conveys the notion of temporal gradualness and is applied to stative predicates

- (36) “E chegar ao fim do jogo só com quatro cartões amarelos mostrados já **vai sendo** uma raridade no futebol português.” (NP, par 51352) [EP]  
 “(...) numa altura em que as polémicas de bastidores, as contratações de pilotos e os treinos das equipas já **vão sendo** notícia (...)” (NP, par 43798) [EP]  
 “As boas, são agradáveis, mas o peso das más (que querem, já **vai sendo** sina) suplanta em muito qualquer surpresa minimamente agradável.” (NP, par 33426) [EP]  
 “Como já **vai sendo** hábito, esta celebração «fontista» foi acolitada pela insânia do (...) IPPAR (...)” (NP, par 55749) [EP]

Often, a particular rhetorical (euphemistic) effect is obtained, since gradualness does not usually combine with the relevant states (cf. the oddity of adding the adverbial *aos poucos* – roughly, *little by little* – to the sequences at stake). In these contexts, the suggestion is that those states gradually come into existence rather than start at particular points in time. Observe also the following examples that correspond to a relatively informal register:

- (37) a. Já **vão sendo** horas de irmos embora. [EP]  
 already go being hours of [we] go away  
 ‘It is high about time that we leave.’  
 b. Já **vais tendo** idade para teres juízo! [EP]  
 [you] already go having age for [you] have wisdom  
 ‘It is high about time that you behave!’

**ii.** structures with the compound form *ter vindo* (a INF)

As said above (cf. examples in (21)), the sequence *ter vindo* a INF is fairly common in EP to express gradual change, as in (38a). To express the same value, BP normally uses a simpler sequence with the auxiliary verb *vir* and the «gerúndio», as in (38b).

- (38) a. As relações com os Estados Unidos **têm vindo a melhorar**.  
 “the relationships with the United States have come to improve”  
 The relationships with the United States have been improving.  
 [typical of EP]  
 b. As relações com os Estados Unidos **vêm melhorando**.  
 “the relationships with the United States come improving”  
 [typical of BP]

At this point, we must note that there seems to be a general tendency in BP to avoid structures with compound auxiliary verbs of the form *ter* + PAST PARTICIPLE. For instance, whereas EP frequently uses sequences like *ter estado* (*a* INF) or *ter andado* (*a* INF), these are very rare in BP, be it with the infinitive or with the «gerúndio» (only 3 occurrences of *ter estado* in the BP corpus and no register of *ter andado*). The following complex forms are thus typical of EP:

- (39) “As grandes discotecas de Albufeira e Vilamoura também **têm estado a abarrotar**, desde quarta-feira.” (NP, par 12549) [EP]  
 “Os assuntos financeiros **têm estado a ser** tratados pelo presidente da AFP (...).” (NP, par 26932) [EP]
- (40) “Durante a próxima semana, milhares de cientistas norte-americanos reúnem-se em São Francisco para explicar aos seus pares e ao público (...) aquilo que **têm andado a fazer**.” (NP, par 63998) [EP]  
 “Acabou nos 1583,09 pontos (...), depois de **ter andado a oscilar** quase permanentemente.” (NP, par 41044) [EP]

We will not elaborate on this issue, which certainly requires a more extensive and minute analysis.

#### 4. Adverbial «gerúndio»

##### 4.1. Towards a semantic characterisation of the adverbial «gerúndio»

The semantic characterisation of the adverbial «gerúndio» is a complex issue that cannot be exhaustively explored in this paper. However, we will briefly present some basic elements of analysis that permit a better understanding of the differences identified in the next subsection. We will leave a more thorough investigation of the linguistic facts that will be presented here for another paper.

A basic semantic question concerning the adverbial «gerúndio» is the exact value of the gerundive morpheme (*-ndo*) in the relevant structures. The classical view – which can be found in traditional Portuguese grammars, in other recent works about Portuguese (cf. e. g. Leal, 2001; Lobo, 2002), and in the grammars of other Romance languages (cf. especially Lonzi, 1991, for Italian, and Lagunilla, 1999, for Spanish) –, is that the «gerúndio» is a highly **polysemic operator**. This view is grounded on the fact that adverbial gerundive clauses may be associated with a wide range of interpositional values. Some of the main ones for Portuguese are listed below, where – following a common use – we baptize the subtype of «gerúndio» according to the value of the whole gerundive clause. The general typology and the designations – which are our own, although inspired in the work of other

authors – is merely tentative. In general, we believe that the semantics of gerundive clauses is easier to capture within a formal framework that takes into account the rhetorical relations established in discourse, or **discourse relations** (henceforth, DRs), in the spirit of Asher (1993), Lascarides & Asher (1993), or more recent work within the same line of research. The treatment of the adverbial «gerúndio» within this framework seems promising, and worth a more detailed consideration. The typology presented below is, to some extent, related to this work.

At least the following semantic values of gerundive clauses – and, by extension (for the sake of simplicity), of the «gerúndio» – may be distinguished<sup>12</sup>:

**i. POSTERIORITY «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause identifies a situation that occurs after the one represented in the main clause, a DR comparable to Narration being established.

- (41) O assaltante entrou no banco, [**dirigindo-se** calmamente ao caixa].  
 the burglar entered<sub>PERF PAST</sub> in-the bank, directing-himself calmly to-the cashier  
 ‘The burglar entered the bank and came up calmly to the cashier.’

**ii. ANTERIORITY «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause identifies a situation that occurs prior to the one represented in the main clause, a DR comparable to the reverse of Narration being established.

- (42) [**Atravessando** o banco], o assaltante dirigiu -se ao caixa e gritou: «Mãos ao alto!»  
 crossing the bank, the burglar directed<sub>PERF PAST</sub>-himself to-the cashier and yelled: «Hands at-the high!»  
 ‘Crossing the bank hall, the burglar came up to the cashier and yelled: «Hands up!».’

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<sup>12</sup> Not all values of the «gerúndio» are equally abundant. For instance, the posteriority, the anteriority and the temporal overlapping «gerúndio» are very frequent in narrative literary discourse, but appear much less in the journalistic discourse included in the NP corpus. We will ignore henceforth all facts pertaining to the frequency of the values at stake, or to the type of discourse where they predominantly emerge.



**iii. TEMPORAL OVERLAPPING «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause identifies a situation that is temporally concomitant with the one represented in the main clause. Typically, parallel activities are involved.

- (43) O gorila corria na jaula, [**gesticulando** de modo brusco].  
the gorilla ran<sub>IMPERFPAST</sub> in-the cage, gesticulating of way brisk  
'The gorilla was running to and fro in the cage, making brisk gestures.'

**iv. BACKGROUNDING «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause identifies a (typically stative) situation which sets the temporal background for the situation represented in the main clause, a DR comparable to Background being established.

- (44) [**Passeando** pela praia], a Ana encontrou uma moeda de ouro muito antiga.  
walking by-the beach, the Ana found<sub>PERFPAST</sub> a coin of gold very old  
'Ana found a very old gold coin as she was walking along the beach.'

**v. BACKGROUNDED «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause identifies a situation which occurs against the temporal background set by the situation represented in the main clause, a DR comparable to the reverse of Background being established. It normally requires the compound «gerúndio».

- (45) A Ana passeou durante horas pela praia, [**tendo encontrado** uma moeda de ouro muito antiga].  
the Ana walked<sub>PERFPAST</sub> for hours by-the beach, having found a coin of gold very old  
'Ana walked along the beach for hours and found a very old gold coin.'

**vi. ELABORATIVE «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause identifies part of a bigger situation, represented in the main clause, a DR comparable to Elaboration being established. It normally requires the compound «gerúndio».

- (46) A Ana remodelou toda a casa, [**tendo pintado** a sala de azul].  
 the Ana remodelled<sub>PERF PAST</sub> all the house, having painted the  
 living-room of blue  
 ‘Ana remodelled the whole house and painted the living room  
 blue.’

**vii. MANNER «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause identifies a characteristic of the situation represented in the main clause.

- (47) A Ana recitou o poema [quase **cantando**].  
 the Ana recited<sub>PERFPAST</sub> the poem almost singing  
 ‘Ana recited the poem almost as singing.’

**viii. INSTRUMENTAL «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause identifies the instrument or means to achieve the situation represented in the main clause. Similar, though not identical, to the Causal «gerúndio», below (cf. Lonzi, 1991).

- (48) A polícia dispersou os manifestantes [**lançando** gás lacrimogéneo].  
 the police dispersed<sub>PERF PAST</sub> the demonstrators spreading gas  
 lachrymal  
 ‘The police dispersed the demonstrators by firing tear gas.’

**ix. CAUSAL «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause identifies a situation that causes or explains the one represented in the main clause, a DR comparable to Explanation being established.

- (49) [**Temendo** ser mal interpretado], o Paulo decidiu não falar.  
 fearing be<sub>INF</sub> badly interpreted, the Paulo decided<sub>PERF PAST</sub> NEG  
 talk<sub>INF</sub>  
 ‘Paulo decided not to talk, because he was afraid of being  
 misinterpreted.’

**x. RESULTATIVE «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause identifies a situation that is the consequence or result of the one represented in the main clause, a DR comparable to Result being established. It may be considered the reverse of either an instrumental – cf. (50) – or a causal – cf. (51) – relation.

- (50) A polícia lançou gás lacrimogéneo, [**dispersando** os manifestantes].  
the police spread<sub>PERF PAST</sub> gas lachrymal, dispersing the demonstrators  
'The police fired tear gas, (thus) dispersing the demonstrators.'
- (51) O Paulo temeu ser mal interpretado, [**decidindo** não falar].  
the Paulo feared<sub>PERF PAST</sub> be<sub>INF</sub> badly interpreted, deciding NEG talk<sub>INF</sub>  
'Paulo was afraid of being misinterpreted and (therefore) decided not to talk.'

**xi. CONDITIONAL «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause has the semantic value of a conditional clause.

- (52) **Vivendo** numa cidade pequena, teríamos mais qualidade de vida.  
living in -a town small, [we] would-have more quality of life  
'If we lived in a small town, we would have a better quality of life.'

**xii. CONCESSIVE «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause has the semantic value of a concessive clause.

- (53) É incrível! [(**Sendo**) rico como é], o Paulo comprou um carro em segunda mão.  
[it] is incredible! (being) rich as [he] is, the Paulo bought a car in second hand  
'It's incredible! Rich as he is, Paulo bought a second-hand car.'

**xiii. ADVERSATIVE «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause has the semantic value of an adversative clause.

- (54) O Paulo estuda pouco, [**conseguindo** (no entanto) ter boas notas].  
the Paulo studies little, managing (nevertheless) have<sub>INF</sub> good marks  
'Paulo studies little but he manages to have good marks.'

**xiv. OPPOSITIONAL «GERÚNDIO»**

The gerundive clause identifies a situation that merely contrasts with the one represented by the main clause.

- (55) O Paulo não foi para Londres, [**ficando** antes em Paris].  
the Paulo NEG go to London, staying rather in Paris  
'Paulo did not go to London; he rather stayed in Paris.'

## XV. NEUTER «GERÚNDIO»

The gerundive clause identifies a (typically stative) situation that is associated with the one represented in the main clause, in such a way that no temporal, mereological, causal, instrumental, conditional or contrastive relation holds between them. We might perhaps vaguely term this relation as *simple association of two situations*, but, on a closer inspection, possibly different types of discourse relations – like Comment, Instantiation or Generalisation, for instance – would have to be taken into account. «Neuter» is therefore a provisional cover-up term.

- (56) Os juros serão pagos anualmente, [**sendo** o BPA quem efectua o pagamento].  
 the interest will-be paid annually, being the BPA who makes the payment  
 ‘The interest will be paid annually and the BPA will be the one to make the payment.’

Often, both in EP and BP, speakers resort to the sequence *sendo que* (“being that”), acting as a true subordinate conjunction, when the value at stake is present (32 occurrences of *sendo que* in the EP corpus vs. 417 in the BP corpus). For many speakers, the combination at stake is, in some cases, regarded as marginal or stilistically clumsy. We will not explore the issue here.

- (57) “(...) poderão participar na assembleia os accionistas possuidores de pelo menos cem acções, **sendo que** cada grupo do referido número de acções confere o direito a um voto.” (NP, par 5998) [EP]  
 “Qualquer contravenção será sancionada, **sendo que** as penas vão da admoestação à expulsão da escola.” (NP, par 59373) [EP]  
 “As florestas são úmidas, densas e quentes **sendo que** animais de todos os tipos habitam esta região.” (NILC, par 98126) [BP]  
 “O invento tinha a forma de um revólver, **sendo que** a objetiva ficava no cano e o filme no tambor giratório.” (NILC, par 100791) [BP]

As can be easily seen, the fifteen relations described above may be grouped in different classes or families. For instance, (vi) and (vii) involve different components or aspects of the same situation, whereas the other cases generally involve situations conceived of as independent. Within this second group, (i) through (v) involve essentially temporal relations, (viii) through (x) involve causal or instrumental relations, (xi) involves conditionality, (xii) through (xiv) involve contrastive relations and (xv) is typically atemporal. We leave the elaboration of this question also for further research.

The issue that we are interested in exploring here is whether the various semantic values at stake are directly conveyed by the «gerúndio» – as is covertly or explicitly assumed in most of the literature – or not. In our opinion, at least three arguments seem to disfavour the idea of direct conveyance by the «gerúndio», i.e. the idea of a polysemous gerund morpheme. First, the «gerúndio» may appear in adverbial clauses associated with contradictory values, like anteriority and posteriority (cf. (41)-(42)), cause and effect (cf. (49)-(51)), instrument (or means) and result (cf. (48)-(50)). Therefore, if the values in question were directly marked by the gerundive morpheme, this morpheme would instantiate an exotic case of “antonymic polysemy”. Secondly, the interpropositional values at stake need not be morphologically marked, and arise in sequences of two juxtaposed sentences as well (in association with well-known rhetorical processes discussed in the literature about discourse relations).

- (58) O assaltante entrou no banco. Dirigiu-se calmamente ao caixa.  
‘The burglar entered the bank. He came up calmly to the cashier.’  
[Narration. Similar to (41)]
- (59) O Paulo decidiu não falar. Temeu ser mal interpretado.  
‘Paulo decided not to talk. He was afraid of being misinterpreted.’  
[Explanation. Similar to (49)]
- (60) O Paulo temeu ser mal interpretado. Decidiu não falar.  
‘Paulo was afraid of being misinterpreted. He decided not to talk.’  
[Result. Similar to (49)]

Thirdly, some semantic values – like posteriority, temporal overlap or result – may be marked by explicit adverbial expressions (within the gerundive clause), with no sense of redundancy emerging. Observe the following sentences, similar to (41), (43) and (51) above, with the addition of *em seguida* [“right after”], *simultaneamente* [“simultaneously”] and *por isso* [“therefore”], respectively.

- (61) a. O assaltante atravessou o banco, [**dirigindo-se em seguida** calmamente ao caixa].  
b. O gorila corria na jaula, [**gesticulando simultaneamente** de modo brusco].  
c. O Paulo temeu ser mal interpretado, [**decidindo por isso** não falar].

In fact, some interpropositional values – like the contrastive ones, for instance – are preferably marked by explicit adverbial means (cf. the use of *no entanto* [“nevertheless”] and *antes* [“rather”] in (54) and (55), respectively).

Taking all these facts into account, a second hypothesis may be considered, according to which the «gerúndio» is a mere **syntactic marker of propositional connection**, that is, a semantically null morpheme comparable to the complementizer *que* (“that”). However, this hypothesis does not smoothly account for the fact that the combination of matrix and gerundive clauses seems to be more restricted than the combination of two sentences by mere juxtaposition or conjunctive coordination. In particular, the association of disconnected events, in listing contexts, appears to be incompatible with the «gerúndio», though not with juxtaposition or coordination. Observe the adequacy of the following sequences to the question: «*O que aconteceu?*» («*What happened?*»):

- (62) a. Houve um terramoto na Ásia e os sindicatos convocaram uma greve geral para Setembro.<sup>13</sup>  
 there-was a earthquake in -the Asia and the trade-unions called-for a strike general for September  
 ‘There was an earthquake in Asia and the trade unions called for a general strike in September.’
- b. \*{Havendo / Tendo havido} um terramoto na Ásia, os sindicatos convocaram uma greve geral para Setembro.  
 {there-being / there-having been} an earthquake in-the Asia, the trade-unions called-for a strike general for September
- b’. \*Houve um terramoto na Ásia, tendo os sindicatos convocado uma greve geral para Setembro.  
 there-was a earthquake in-the Asia, having the trade-unions called-for a strike general for September

Finally, a third hypothesis may be envisaged, according to which the «gerúndio» is a **discourse operator** that simply marks **association of events**, i. e. a wide-spectrum interpropositional connective which merely requires that the associated situations are linked by one among a vast set of discourse relations (to be defined according to multiple contextual and/or situational factors), therefore being incompatible with disconnected events. This hypothesis – that we formulate here in a rather vague way, to be elaborated in further investigation – seems to easily accommodate the fact that the adverbial «gerúndio» is often associated with a temporally neuter value – cf. (56) – that paradigmatically instantiates the simple association in question.

#### 4.2. Differences between EP and BP concerning the adverbial «gerúndio»

The competition between «gerúndio» and prepositioned infinitive that was explored in section 3 (in connection with the periphrastic «gerúndio») equally

<sup>13</sup> This sequence is also possible with mere sentence juxtaposition, mentioning (part of) a list of relevant events: – *O que aconteceu?* – *Houve um terramoto na Ásia. Os sindicatos convocaram uma greve geral para Setembro. ...*

affects structures where the adverbial «gerúndio» emerges, and, apparently, with increasing complexity. In this regard, let us note, in the first place, that the use of *a* INF in adverbial contexts appears to be subject to strict temporal and aspectual requisites that drastically limit the contexts in which it may surface.

In terms of temporal semantics, the sequence *a* INF normally requires that the involved situations overlap. Consequently, it does not alternate with the «gerúndio» in structures that involve posteriority or anteriority relations. This is for instance the case of sentences with four types of «gerúndio» – posteriority «gerúndio» and resultative «gerúndio» (where the situations expressed by the adverbial clause occur **after** those expressed by the main clause), anteriority «gerúndio» and causal «gerúndio» (where the situations expressed by the adverbial clause occur **before** those expressed by the main clause):

i. posteriority «gerúndio» (cf. (41))

- (63) O assaltante entrou no banco, {**dirigindo-se** / \***a dirigir-se**} calmamente ao caixa.

ii. resultative «gerúndio» (cf. (50)-(51))

- (64) A polícia lançou gás lacrimogéneo, {**dispersando** / \***a dispersar**} os manifestantes.

- (65) O Paulo temeu ser mal interpretado, {**decidindo** / \***a decidir**} não falar.

iii. anteriority «gerúndio» (cf. (42))

- (66) {**Atravessando** / \***A atravessar**} o banco, o assaltante dirigiu-se ao caixa e gritou: «Mãos ao alto!»

iv. causal «gerúndio» (cf. (49))

- (67) {**Temendo** / \***A temer**} ser mal interpretado, o Paulo decidiu não falar.

The instrumental «gerúndio» is a special case. In fact, as a rule, it typically involves a posteriority relation, which precludes that *a* INF is normally allowed to replace the «gerúndio» – cf. the oddity of (48) with *a lançar* instead of *lançando*:

- (68) A polícia dispersou os manifestantes {**lançando** / ??**a lançar**} gás lacrimogéneo.

Nevertheless, in some sentences involving instrumental relations, the sequence *a* INF is possible, and quite natural, for that matter:

- (69) A Ana enriqueceu {**vendendo** / **a vender**} quadros de pintores desconhecidos.  
 “the Ana got-rich {selling / to sell} pictures of painters unknown”  
 Ana got rich (by) selling pictures from unknown painters.

In these cases, however, an Aktionsart shift seems to take place: the main clause identifies not only the culmination that follows the situation identified by the gerundive clause (Ana achieving her status as a rich person, in (69)), but also the preparatory phase that overlaps that situation (the process of Ana getting rich). Thus, the use of *a* INF is not exceptional here, since it involves temporal overlapping.

As for aspectual restrictions, we must note that, in the sequence *a* INF, the infinitive verb typically represents basic or derived activities (or, in a few exceptional cases, states, incidentally those that are compatible with *estar a*). Consequently, *a* INF does not alternate with the «gerúndio» in structures that involve other aspectual classes, in particular regular states (including those with the compound «gerúndio» – *tendo* PP). This is namely the case of sentences with three types of «gerúndio»: backgrounded «gerúndio» and elaborative «gerúndio» (as they typically occur with the compound «gerúndio», which represents stative eventualities), and the neuter «gerúndio» (as it typically occurs with states):

- i. backgrounded «gerúndio» (cf. (45))

- (70) A Ana passeou durante horas pela praia, {**tendo** / \***a ter**} encontrado uma moeda de outro muito antiga.

- ii. elaborative «gerúndio» (cf. (46))

- (71) A Ana remodelou toda a casa, {**tendo** / \***a ter**} pintado a sala de azul.

- iii. neuter «gerúndio» (cf. (56))

- (72) Os juros serão pagos anualmente, {**sendo** / \***a ser**<sup>14</sup>} o BPA quem efectua o pagamento.

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<sup>14</sup> The sentence with *a ser* is grammatical under a different reading, which is irrelevant here. In that reading, *a* is a conditional conjunction with the same value as *se* (“if”), not the kind of preposition under analysis in this paper.



Note, by the way, that in structures with subtypes of «gerúndio» that allow a broader choice of aspectual classes, the alternation infinitive/«gerúndio» is contingent on the classes involved. Take for instance the concessive «gerúndio». In (53), it does not compete with *a* INF, since the adverbial clause represents a state:

- (73) É incrível! {**Sendo** / \***A ser**} rico como é, o Paulo comprou um carro em segunda mão.

In contrast, the adverbial clause below (also with a concessive value) involves an activity, and is therefore perfectly grammatical with *a* INF in EP:

- (74) A Ana consegue ter notas altas, (mesmo) {**estudando** / **a estudar**} pouco.  
the Ana manages have<sub>INF</sub> marks high, even {studying / to study} little  
'Ana manages to get high marks, even though she studies little.'

Before considering some data showing the alternation of «gerúndio» and (prepositioned) infinitive in adverbial clauses, it should be noticed that frequency values on the use of gerundive clauses in EP and BP are harder to obtain from the corpora than with other instances. Our intuition as speakers, however, is that the tendency to avoid the «gerúndio» in EP is not so strong in (at least some) adverbial gerundives as it is in periphrastic constructions, but we will have to leave a more accurate assessment of this intuition for further research. Corpora consultation also indicates that BP makes very sparse use of the *a* INF construction in adverbial contexts. Let us now look at some examples:

**i.** temporal overlapping «gerúndio» (cf. (43))

- (75) O macaco corria na jaula, {**gesticulando** / **a gesticular**} de modo brusco.

**ii.** backgrounding «gerúndio» (cf. (44))

- (76) {**Passeando** / **A passear**} pela praia, a Ana encontrou uma moeda de ouro muito antiga.

## iii. manner «gerúndio» (cf. (47))

(77) A Ana recitou o poema quase {**cantando / a cantar**}.

## iv. instrumental «gerúndio» (cf. (69))

(78) A Ana enriqueceu {**vendendo / a vender**} quadros de pintores desconhecidos].

## v. concessive «gerúndio» (cf. (74))

(79) A Ana consegue ter notas altas, [(mesmo) {**estudando / a estudar**} pouco.

## vi. conditional «gerúndio» (cf. (52))

(80) {**Vivendo / A viver**} numa cidade pequena, teríamos mais qualidade de vida.

Other linguistic facts may interfere in the competition between «gerúndio» and prepositioned infinitive, making the general picture even more complicated. We leave the scrutiny of this topic for further research.

The following examples, involving prepositioned infinitives, are of the type that a modern Brazilian speaker would normally write with a «gerúndio», and are thus typical of EP. They were taken from literary texts, since this kind of use is hard to find in press discourse.

- (81) “Mas Carlos nessa noite não se interessava, jogando distraído, **a cantarolar** também baixo bocados tristes da Balada (...)” (Eça de Queirós, *Os Maias*, in CLP)  
 “Foi quase **a tremer** que empurrou diante de si a porta da casa, que encontrou aberta.” (Júlio Dinis, *A Morgadinha dos Canaviais*, in CLP)  
 “(...) e a velha traquitana lá partiu a galope, **a escorrer** de água, atroando a calçada.” (Eça de Queirós, *Os Maias*, in CLP)  
 “E de novo emudeceu, assombrada, devorando os movimentos do Ega, que, debruçado sobre o sofá, desembrulhava **a tremer** a caixa de charutos da Monforte.” (Eça de Queirós, *Os Maias*, in CLP)

Apart from the issues related with the competition «gerúndio»-infinitive, EP and BP strikingly differ in the use of **prepositioned gerundive clauses**. Disregarding historical and dialectal facts once more, we will subsequently mention a few facts.

BP often uses the prepositioned gerundive clauses (with the preposition *em*) associated with **conditional** – cf. (82) – and **causal values** – cf. (83). Modern EP normally does not use a preposition in these structures. Therefore, the following examples sound as typical BP:

- (82) a. “Convém apurar a veracidade da notícia e eventuais responsabilidades, **em havendo** atos antijurídicos.” (NILC, par 25237) [BP]  
 “Mas, **em ocorrendo** essa circunstância, os prazos, daí por diante, no recurso, passam a ser singelos” (NILC, par 66124) [BP]  
 “Setores do governo, entre eles o Ministério da Justiça, defendiam que **em não se tratando** de calamidade pública (...) o uso desse mecanismo seria inconstitucional.” (NILC, par Brasil-94a-pol-2) [BP]
- b. “Em face do direito vigente (...), inválida é a citação feita na pessoa do gerente sem poderes de representação, **mesmo em se tratando** de atos aprovados por ele em nome e por conta da pessoa jurídica a que pertence” (NILC, par 66437) [BP]
- c. “Eventual anomalia na distribuição deve ser impugnada pelas vias hábeis, pena de preclusão, **salvo em se tratando** de competência absoluta” (NILC, par 67324) [BP]
- (83) “Eduardo Frei Ruiz Tagle (...) assumiu ontem a Presidência do Chile em meio a louvações à democracia previsíveis, **em se tratando** do segundo presidente eleito democraticamente depois dos 17 anos da ditadura militar chefiada pelo general Augusto Pinochet.” (NILC, par Mundo-94b-pol-1) [BP]

In general, modern written EP uses prepositioned gerundive clauses rather sparsely. However, these clauses occur frequently in classical authors, like Eça de Queirós and Almeida Garrett, with a **temporal value**: either an episodic future value – as in (84) –, or a generic value, corresponding to correlation of events – as in (85). Furthermore, in informal (oral) EP speech, the episodic future value is relatively common in structures like (86). Prepositioned gerundive clauses with temporal values seem to be very rare in BP.

- (84) “Então descemos por essa Rua do Alecrim, que já não chove, depois pelo Aterro fora, a passo ginástico, e **em chegando** lá você está curado.” (Eça de Queirós, *Os Maias*, in CLP)  
 “O seu noivo é capitão ao serviço da companhia, e parte **em casando**.” (Almeida Garrett, *Viagens na Minha Terra*, in CLP)

- (85) “Meu pai, que é tão bom português, (...) **em ouvindo** duvidar da morte do meu querido rei D. Sebastião... ninguém tal há-de dizer, mas põe-se logo outro, muda de semblante, fica pensativo e carrancudo” (Almeida Garrett, *Frei Luís de Sousa*, in CLP)

“Não está mais na minha mão; **em abrindo** a boca, me chovem os conceitos aos borbotões” (A. J. Silva, *Guerras do Alecrim e Manjerona*, in CLP)

- (86) **Em sendo** oito horas, vou-me embora. [EP]

“in being eight hours, [I] go-myself away”

At eight, I will leave.

## 5. Conclusions

Overall, we can say that the use of the «gerúndio» is fairly similar in European and Brazilian Portuguese. In fact, this verb form occurs in the same (five) major types of syntactic environment and may be associated with the same interpositional semantic values – e.g. temporal, elaborative, causal, instrumental, conditional or contrastive –, when used adverbially.

Nevertheless, differences exist in the use of prepositioned gerundive clauses, which are worth noticing. Minor ones regard gerundive clauses preceded by *em*, with causal and conditional values, which are common in written BP, but not in EP (cf. (82)-(83)); gerundive clauses preceded by *em*, with simple temporal values, were common in classical EP writers and are still used in informal EP speech, but do not usually occur in normal BP (cf. (84)-(86)).

More striking is the difference between EP and BP which amounts to the fact that, in (at least some variants of) EP, the «gerúndio» tends to fall into disuse after some auxiliary aspectual verbs, like *estar* or *andar*, or in adverbial gerundive clauses that involve temporal overlapping of activities, for instance. Given the very common status of these constructions, the impact of this sort of variation between EP and BP becomes considerably perceptible. As was briefly mentioned, the phenomenon seems to be subject to historical and dialectal considerations that could not be explored in this paper (though we noted, for instance, that Portuguese classical authors use the «gerúndio» in contexts that are seldom found in modern EP newspapers). Furthermore, the tendency to abandon the «gerúndio» shows some regularities – e.g. temporal and aspectual restrictions –, but evinces some asymmetries as well, typical of phenomena that have not completely stabilized. This is particularly evident in the case of the periphrastic «gerúndio», where verbs within the same syntactic and semantic family seem to behave differently.

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Telmo Mória

Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal

[tmoria@netcabo.pt](mailto:tmoria@netcabo.pt)

Evani Viotti

Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil

[viotti@usp.br](mailto:viotti@usp.br)