


FORMOSO DO ARAGUAIA - TOCANTINS: THE SEMANTIC-LEXICAL FORMS OF THE GAME BURNED WHIP IN THE LEGAL AMAZON

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the lexical variants found for the game “chicote queimada” (burnt whip) based on the speech of residents of Formoso do Araguaia, Tocantins. The main objective is to investigate the multidimensional and relational dialectological representations in the semantic-lexical context of these speakers, who were born or live in the locality, which is part of the Legal Amazon. To achieve this objective, a qualitative approach based on

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Multidimensional and Relational Dialectology is adopted. The three-step technique of Thun (2010) is used – ask, insist, and suggest – and the Semantic-Lexical Questionnaire (QSL) of the Linguistic Atlas of Brazil (ALiB), composed of 202 questions, distributed in nine semantic areas, is applied. However, this study focuses on the area of children's games and entertainment, focusing on question 164: "A game in which the children stand in a circle, while another passes with an object that he drops behind one of them, and the latter picks up the object and runs away?" Furthermore, the theoretical and methodological assumptions of Sociolinguistics are incorporated into the study based on Labov's dimensions (Labov, 2008). The study included 48 informants, equally distributed between males and females, and divided into two generations: the oldest (CbGII) and the youngest (CbGI). Considering the migratory dynamics of the region studied, only informants from the lower class (Cb) with a lower level of education were selected. The analyses focused on the occurrence, frequency, and divergence of the variants found, and this information was recorded in polymorphic maps and form status maps, to provide a globalized analysis.

Keywords: Multidimensional and Relational Dialectology, Sociolinguistics, Children's Play, Lexical Variants, Formoso do Araguaia.

INTRODUCTION

This article presents an excerpt from the dissertation entitled “Semantic-Lexical Atlas of Formoso do Araguaia - Tocantins: Pluridimensional and Relational Dialectology in the Legal Amazon - ASeLFo” (Araujo, 2023). It is based on the Pluridimensional and Relational Dialectology approach, according to Thun (2010), and on the principles of the theory of Linguistic Variation and Change (Weinreich, Labov and Herzog, 2006; 1968). The analysis covers several linguistic dimensions – diatopic, diastratic, diagenetic, diagenational, diavarietal, and diareferential – to contribute to dialectal studies of the Brazilian Portuguese language and highlight the local cultural richness through the investigation of linguistic variations present in Formoso do Araguaia. The main focus of the study is the lexical form “chicote queimada” (burnt whip) and its denominative variations recorded in the municipality, according to question 164 of the Semantic-Lexical Questionnaire of the Linguistic Atlas of Brazil (QSL/ALiB), belonging to the semantic area of children's games and entertainment. Formoso do Araguaia, recognized as the “capital of irrigation”, is located close to Bananal Island and the Indigenous communities of the Macro-jê trunk. The municipality is crossed by two important rivers: the Formoso River, essential for the local irrigation project and the production of rice and watermelon, and the Javaés River, formed by a tributary of the Araguaia River, known for its richness in species such as cherubim, pirarucu, piauçu, and boto. Close to the municipal limits, there are the indigenous communities of Canuanã, São João, and Porto Piauí, representing the Javaés, Avá-Canoeiros, and Krahô-Canela ethnic groups, respectively. Another relevant aspect is the community of Canuanã, located in the rural area of the municipality, which was named after the neighboring indigenous community. This area is home to a Bradesco Foundation elementary school, located on the Canuanã Farm, which plays a fundamental role in the education of students in the region. The community is located on the banks of the Javaés River, close to Bananal Island, and is home to approximately two thousand residents.

Given this cultural and linguistic diversity, it is pertinent to discuss the semantic-lexical aspects of the region. In this context, it is essential to investigate whether the aforementioned dimensions influence the daily language of the municipality's inhabitants. The study also seeks to analyze the impact of the migration process on the local speech of Formoso do Araguaia, given the linguistic diversity resulting from the presence of migrants from Maranhão, Rio Grande do Sul, caipiras, riverside dwellers, and pioneers in the region.

The objective is to confirm the hypothesis that migration significantly influences the local language.

The general objective of this work is to analyze the processing of linguistic variation and change in the formation of the lexicon of the inhabitants of the municipality, exploring multidimensional and relational dialectological representations, with emphasis on the semantic-lexical aspect of the contributions of migrant, Indigenous, and native speakers. To achieve this objective, the study follows the dimensions established by Thun (2000; 2005) in Multidimensional and Relational Dialectology and by Labov (2008) in Sociolinguistics. The article also examines the influence of the migratory process and the different Labovian dimensions in the formation of the lexicon and speech in the community of Formoso do Araguaia, Tocantins.

TRADITIONAL DIALECTOLOGY AND SOCIOLINGUISTICS

The development of linguistic research over time is notable, largely thanks to the contribution of the neogrammarians of the University of Leipzig, who employed the historical-comparative method at the end of the 19th century (Faraco, 2006). This method was essential for the advancement of historical linguistics. Dialectology, in turn, emerged as a discipline focused on the identification and description of linguistic variations, taking into account geographic and sociocultural factors. The importance of empirical dialectological research is highlighted when analyzing linguistic variation in various domains, such as age, gender, education, profession, and social position of speakers. In addition, the need for convergence between Dialectology and Sociolinguistics is emphasized, although both approach the social aspects of language in different ways (Thun, 2009). In this context, the creation of the Linguistic Atlas of Brazil (ALiB) represents a milestone in Brazilian geolinguistic and dialectological research, bringing together scholars from different regions of the country to map the variants of Portuguese. Furthermore, the project highlights the various phases of Brazilian Dialectology, from the investigation of the lexicon to the systematization of Geolinguistics. In this way, the theoretical foundations of Geolinguistics, Dialectology, and Sociolinguistics are highlighted as a basis for studies that seek to record and describe linguistic variations in specific communities (Philippsen, 2013).

On the other hand, Sociolinguistics brings a more specific focus on the interaction between language and society. According to Calvet (2002), this area of Linguistics gains relevance precisely because it examines the influence of social factors on language. In this

context, multilingualism plays a crucial role, allowing daily contact between different languages and giving rise to the first objects of study in Sociolinguistics.

Historically, Sociolinguistics emerged in the 1960s, after the publication of the research entitled Sociolinguistics, presented at a conference organized by William Bright at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA). Among its main exponents are William Labov, John Gumperz, Einar Haugen, Dell Hymes, John Fisher, and José Pedro Rona, who contributed significantly to the development of the area.

MULTIDIMENSIONAL AND RELATIONAL DIALECTOLOGY

Thun (1998, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2010) is often cited as an author who made important contributions to the field of linguistics by proposing Pluridimensional and Relational Dialectology, an approach that integrates elements of Areal Dialectology and Sociolinguistics, disciplines previously treated independently. His proposal expands the possibilities of geolinguistic analysis by incorporating a three-dimensional view, considering not only geographic variation but also extralinguistic factors, such as gender, age, and level of education of speakers.

Some fundamental characteristics of this pioneering approach are worth highlighting, such as the participation of several informants, the analysis of standard and substandard varieties, as well as varieties in contact situations. Furthermore, the methodology allows the researcher to suggest variants to the informants and includes different temporal perspectives in the analysis of the data.

It is important to emphasize that this approach does not invalidate previous studies, but seeks to expand the representativeness of linguistic analyses, considering multiple dimensions (Thun, 2005; Labov, 2008). Furthermore, Multidimensional and Relational Dialectology is seen as an evolution of the ideas of Abbé Rousselot and Tomás Navarro Tomás, representing a three-dimensional variational structure that connects traditional Dialectology to the vertical axis of Sociolinguistics.

In conducting this research, the parameters and dimensions defined by Thun (2000a, p. 189) were adopted, as shown in Figure 1 below.:

Figure 1: Parameters and Dimensions of Pluridimensional and Relational Dialectology

Dimensions	Parameters
Diatopic	Network of points: urban area and rural area
Diagerational	(GI) Young Generation – 18 to 40 years old
	(GII) Older Generation – above 50 years old
Diasexual	Man – male
	Woman – female
Diastratic	Social strata/education level
	Lower class (Cb) – up to high school diploma
Diareferential	Objective speech
	Metalinguistic speech
Diaphasic	Three-step tool: asking, insisting, and suggesting/suggesting.

Source: Adapted by the author from Altenhofen (2006, p. 375).

The proposal outlined by Thun (2009) presents a chronological sequence for the study of Dialectology, dividing it into four distinct stages: Nanochronology, Microchronology, Mesochronology, and Macrochronology.

In Nanochronology, the focus is on the continuous analysis of individual discourse, without external influences. In this phase, stylistic elements are investigated, such as palatalization in words like 'tia' and 'dia', in addition to considering non-linguistic variables, such as age and gender.

Microchronology focuses on the discourse of an informant during informal interactions, covering spontaneous responses, metalinguistic comments, and moments of reading. Phonetics plays a fundamental role in this stage, although monodimensional dialectal analysis is limited to responses transcribed in the standard norm.

Mesochronology is associated with Pluridimensional and Relational Dialectology, exploring the linguistic forms used by speakers of different social groups. This phase takes into account variables such as age, sex, and education, which allows us to observe linguistic variation and change over time.

Finally, Macrochronology involves the comparative analysis of the speech of informants from different generations separated by long periods. Data can be obtained through successive repetition in the same group (panel analysis) or by comparing two series of materials from different periods, collected in the present. Macrochronology addresses several dimensions, such as diatopic, diastratic, diagerational, asexual, diaphasic, and diareferential.

Thus, the scheme proposed by Thun (2009) offers a comprehensive chronological structure for dialectological analysis, from the investigation of individual speech modes to the comparison between generations over time. This approach allows for a deeper

understanding of linguistic variation and change, in different social and historical contexts, integrating multiple linguistic and extralinguistic dimensions.

The article discusses the evolution of dialect studies, emphasizing a multidimensional and relational approach to understanding linguistic uses in diverse communities, such as Formoso do Araguaia, TO. Initially limited to monodimensional assumptions, these studies now incorporate multiple dimensions: diatopic, diastratic, diagenational, asexual, diaphasic, and diareferential.

The diatopic dimension investigates geographic linguistic variations, while the diastratic dimension considers socioeconomic, educational, age, and professional factors. The diagenational dimension focuses on the age of the informants, and the asexual dimension examines differences between the sexes. The diaphasic dimension addresses stylistic aspects of language in different contexts, while the diareferential dimension analyzes the metalanguage and linguistic attitudes of the informants, providing a detailed understanding of linguistic varieties and social perceptions.

Based on Thun, Marques (2022) proposes the three-time technique in linguistic studies, applying it in three ways: simultaneous, successive, and multi-way plurality. This approach allows discussions between informants, interaction with the researcher, and metalinguistic analysis. Thun (2010) emphasizes the steps of asking, insisting, and suggesting in the creation of maps that represent the active use of language, expanding the understanding of the linguistic phenomenon by capturing spontaneous responses, passive knowledge, and accepted suggestions. Tavares de Barros (2019) complements this by suggesting the use of questionnaires, free conversations, and readings, integrating them into the three steps to comprehensively explore the various facets of language.

Krug and Horst (2022) present Thun's proposal in linguistic cartography, highlighting simplification through phenotypic maps, which use a single symbol to represent sociocultural groups, divided by levels of education and generations. The multidimensional and relational approach condenses four groups into a single map, indicating linguistic unity when the results converge. The limitation of using only one symbol per cell in the cross model facilitates visual interpretation, following the concept of the "point-symbol".

From this perspective, Thun (2010) introduces the idea of linguistic zones, as exemplified by the use of "caçula" in Northern Uruguay, where black and white symbols delimit distinct areas. Multidimensional and Relational Dialectology reveals the complexity of linguistic cartography, recording up to four predominant forms in the polymorphic map.

The author's proposal to separate information into successive thematic maps reflects the need for legibility and precision in linguistic representation. In this context, the metaphor of horses in chronophotography presents the idea of simultaneous photographs of the phenomenon in motion, illustrating the evolution in the cartography of linguistic data. This metaphor compares monodimensional linguistic atlases, which resemble historical "snapshots" without retouching, with multidimensional atlases, which allow photographing linguistic changes and choosing the best poses or maps to compose the research.

According to Krug and Horst (2022), Thun uses tools such as structured and free questionnaires, in addition to the three steps (ask, insist, and suggest), to capture multiple aspects of the linguistic phenomenon. These approaches aim to deepen the understanding of linguistic variations over time and space, contributing to advances in linguistic cartographic research. In summary, the interview conducted by Krug and Horst (2022) illustrates how Thun's innovative application of linguistic cartography not only simplifies the representation of sociocultural and generational complexities through phenotypic maps but also deepens the understanding of linguistic dynamics with multidimensional and relational techniques.

By integrating concepts such as the symbol point and linguistic zones, Thun facilitates the visual interpretation of data and proposes new perspectives for the analysis of linguistic variations over time and space. This approach, in addition to strengthening the accuracy of linguistic maps, allows for continued advances in linguistic research, highlighting the importance of rigorous methods and innovative tools for a deeper understanding of global linguistic diversity.

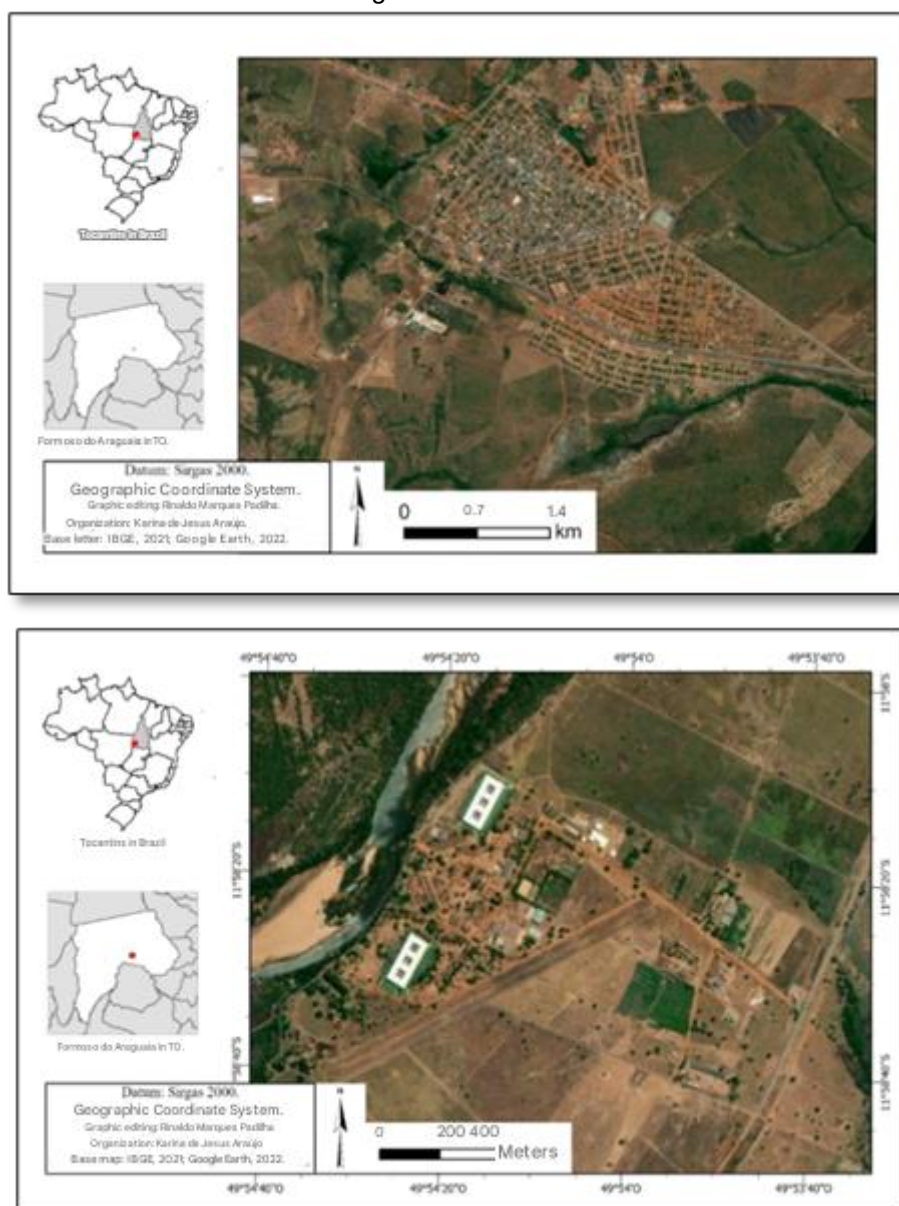
METHODOLOGICAL PATHS

This article examines, in a qualitative manner (Martin; Gaskell, 2008), the semantic-lexical aspects of the variants found in a specific linguistic community: Formoso do Araguaia, in the state of Tocantins, selected for its linguistic richness. The objective is to analyze the occurrence, frequency, and divergence of these variants. The research adopts the approach of Pluridimensional and Relational Dialectology, aiming to record the various forms of speech present in the community. To this end, tools such as the three steps, Thun's cross system (2010), and the dimensions of Labov's Sociolinguistic theory (2008) are used. In addition, the QSL/ALiB is used, containing 202 questions distributed in 14 semantic areas. The area chosen for this study is children's games and entertainment,

focusing on question 164: "A game in which children stand in a circle while another passes behind one of them with an object that he drops, and the latter picks up the object and runs away?". It is important to highlight the historical, cultural, and linguistic characteristics of Formoso do Araguaia. The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the State University of Mato Grosso and followed the guidelines established by CONEP resolutions 466/2012 and 510/2016. During data collection, safety measures were adopted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the use of masks, alcohol gel, and social distancing. The methodology used will be detailed later in this study. The research covers both urban and rural areas of the municipality, considering the urban population growth compared to the rural and the consequent linguistic changes. The selection of the rural area, especially the Canuanã Farm, is essential to examine the linguistic differences between the two survey points. The study investigates the different varieties of Portuguese, dividing the municipality into sociocultural sectors, covering traditional and modern neighborhoods, as well as variations in educational level.

Thus, it is clear that the definition of the dialectal research area is influenced by factors such as geographic location, historical context, economy, and local demographics. In this context, the inclusion of the rural community is essential to analyze and compare the lexicon used in Formoso do Araguaia.

Figure 2: Survey Points - urban and rural
P1 - Formoso do Araguaia/urban P2 - Canuanã Farm/rural



Source: Araujo (2023, p38-40)

The informants were divided into two generations: Generation One (GI), comprised of younger individuals aged between 18 and 40, and Generation Two (GII), comprised of individuals aged 50 or over who had been living in Formoso do Araguaia for over thirty years. Thus, the informants' responses were analyzed based on the semantic area "children's games and entertainment" of the (QSL/ALiB). To ensure the accuracy of the results, the ALiB criteria were followed in the selection of informants, thus avoiding the

inclusion of members of the same family. However, finding informants with the desired profile proved to be a challenge.

Regarding the conduct of the interviews, these were conducted individually. The initial group of informants was comprised of 32 people, equally distributed between men and women, with different levels of education (16 of each gender). In addition, four varietal groups were identified, based on regional varieties of Portuguese (Maranhão, Gaúcho, Caipira, and Ribeirinho). To ensure an even greater balance, 16 other informants were recruited in the third phase of the research. Thus, the final group totaled 48 informants, distributed equally in terms of gender, age, and education, to analyze linguistic variation in Formoso do Araguaia.

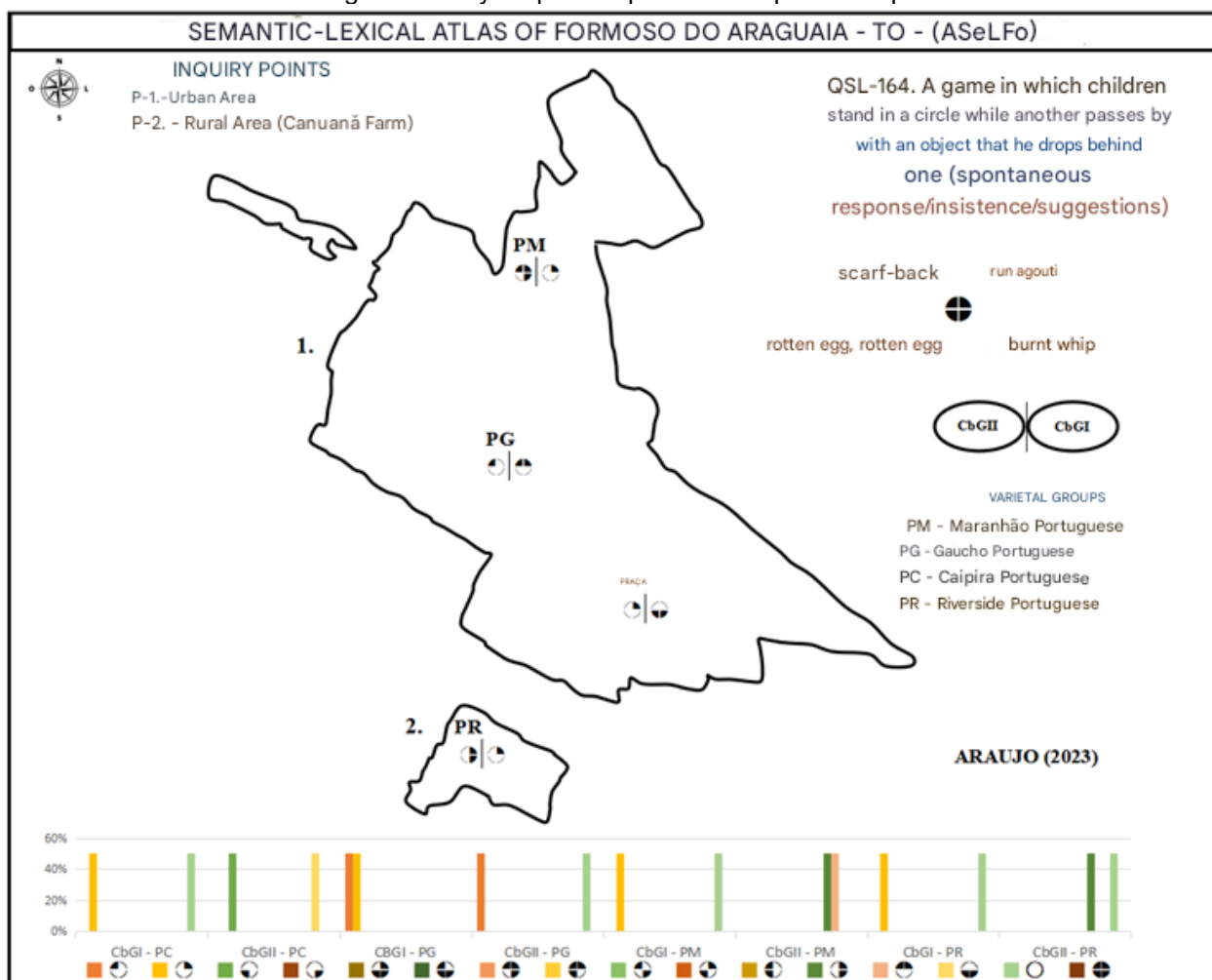
Regarding data collection, this was carried out through recordings of face-to-face meetings, printed questionnaires, and transcriptions. To deal with the risks brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, biosafety measures were adopted, such as the use of masks, alcohol gel, and social distancing. In addition, the support of intermediaries was needed to facilitate contact with informants before visits to the research sites.

Finally, the corpus of this study is composed of variants that represent different semantic-lexical nuances of local linguistic expressions. In this way, the research sought to explore how linguistic variations reflect the cultural and social specificities of Formoso do Araguaia.

RESULTS

The polymorphic map entitled “Burnt Whip” presents a summary of the most representative lexical variants identified in the responses to question 164 of the QSL/ALiB: “What is the name of a game in which children stand in a circle while another passes by with an object that he drops behind one of them and the latter picks up the object and runs away?” Following the methodology proposed by Thun (2010), the map incorporates the three steps — asking, insisting, and suggesting —, allowing a more in-depth analysis of the informants’ linguistic choices.

Figure 1 - Polymorphic map - Burnt whip - 3rd step.



Source: (Araujo, 2023, p. 456).

The map reveals the lexical diversity found in the community studied and provides a clear visual perspective of the variants used, highlighting how these terms reflect local cultural and linguistic dynamics.

Based on the responses of the varietal groups studied — Portuguese from Maranhão (PM), Portuguese from Rio Grande do Sul (PG), Portuguese from the countryside (PC), and Portuguese from the riverside (PR) — the following forms were identified: lenço-atrás, corre-cutia, ovo choco/ovo padre and choco queimada. These variants were selected from several sources, including studies such as the “Atlas Linguístico-Etnográfico da Região Sul do Brasil” (ALERS, 2011), the “Atlas Linguístico de Pernambuco” (ALIPE, 2013) and the “Atlas Semântico-Lexical do Estado de Goiás” (ASELGO, 2013).

Furthermore, the mentioned studies documented the following variants: handkerchief-atrás (ALERS, 2011), choco egg/rot egg (ALERS, 2011; ASELGO, 2013),

corre-cutia (ASELGO, 2013) and chicotinho (ASELGO, 2013; ALIPE, 2013). In this sense, Ferreira (2004, p. 455-456) presents the following meanings for the lexical form:

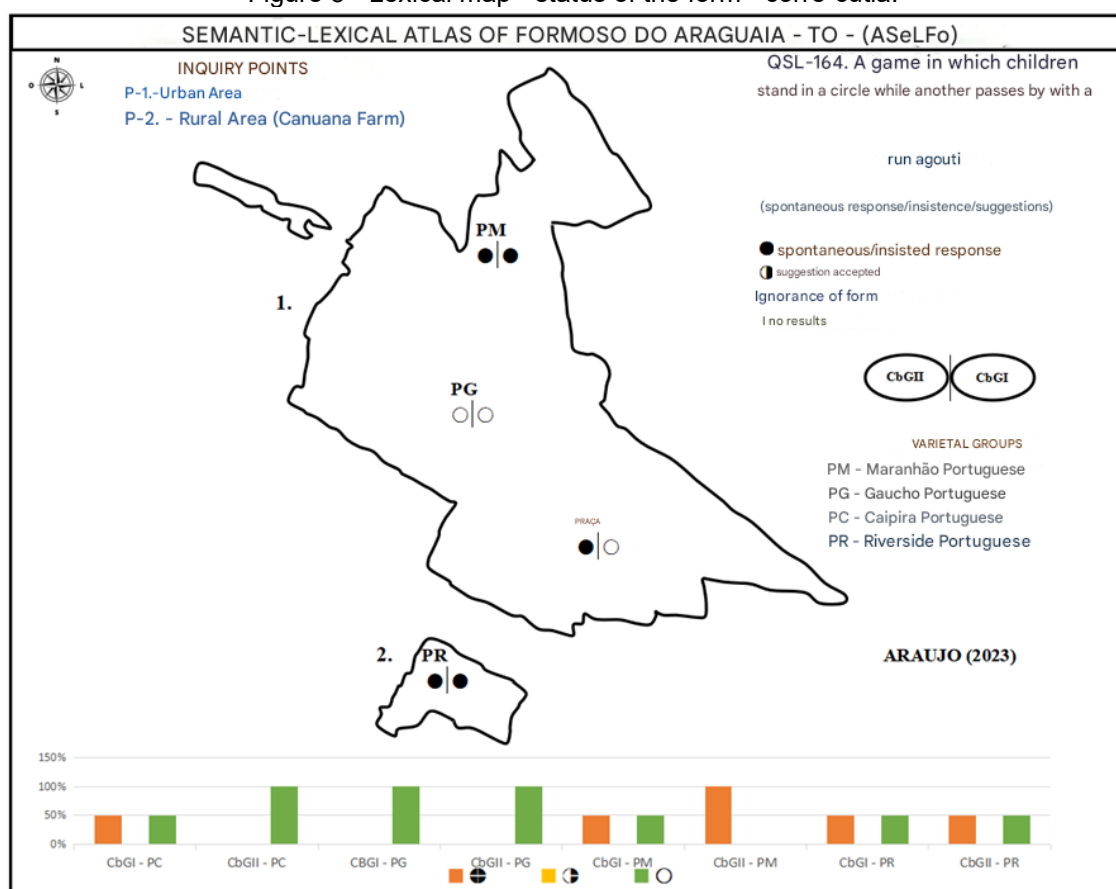
Whip-burn - 1. A children's toy in which a child tries to reach the others by hitting them with a rolled-up handkerchief, in the shape of a whip. 2. A children's toy in which a child hides an object that must be searched for by the others, who, each time they approach it, are warned by the one who hid it with the words "it's hot", and when they move away "it's cold", and when they find it, they hear the other one shout "whip-burn!" and then they become the one who hides it; whip-burn(Ferreira, 2004, p. 455-456).

In the specific context of the PM group and the CbGII generation, the forms lenço-atrás, corre-cutia, and aço queimada were presented, representing 75% of the accepted variants. On the other hand, in the CbGI generation, only corre-cutia was recorded, totaling 25% of the accepted variants.

In the PG group, for the CbGII generation, only the form lenço-atrás were recorded, corresponding to 25% of the knowledge of the accepted variants. Meanwhile, in the CbGI generation, lenço-atrás and corre-cutia were recorded, totaling 50% of the accepted variants.

The PC group, for the CbGII generation, reflected only the form corre-cutia, demonstrating knowledge of 25% of the accepted variants. In the same line, in the CbGI generation, ovo choco/ovo podre and aço queimada were recorded, representing 50% of the knowledge of the accepted variants. Furthermore, the PR group revealed, for the CbGII generation, the forms corre-cutia and aço queimada, totaling 50% of the knowledge of the accepted variants. Meanwhile, in the CbGI generation, only corre-cutia was recorded, which is equivalent to a knowledge of 25% of the documented variants. Considering the analyses of the forms of popular games presented in the different groups and generations, it is possible to observe a significant variation in the frequency and acceptance of the variants. In the context of the PM group and the CbGII and CbGI generations, the forms lenço-atrás, corre-cutia, and aço queimada emerge as the most recognized, with a predominance of 75% among the accepted variants. However, this predominance varies between generations, with the CbGII generation demonstrating a more limited knowledge regarding the forms of popular games, compared to the CbGI generation. These differences between groups and generations suggest a complex dynamic of transmission and evolution of cultural traditions, influenced by a variety of sociocultural and historical factors. In addition, the status of the corre-cutia form is recorded below.

Figure 5 - Lexical map - status of the form - corre-cutia.



Source: (Araujo, 2023, p.458)

When examining the status of the *corre-cutia* form, it is important to highlight that the variants were naturally accepted by the varietal groups: Portuguese from Maranhão (PM), Portuguese from the caipira (PC) and Portuguese from the Ribeirão (PR). However, the younger generation (CbGI) of the caipira group demonstrates a lack of knowledge of the suggested form. In this context, the PG group reveals a lack of familiarity with the variant on the part of the older generation (CbGII). Furthermore, the younger generation only acquires knowledge of the form after insistence from the researcher.

On the other hand, the analysis of the status of the *corre-cutia* form reveals interesting nuances about the transmission and preservation of cultural traditions in different groups and generations. Although this variant was accepted by the groups studied — especially Portuguese from Maranhão, caipira, and ribeirinho — its reception varies significantly between generations. In this sense, the lack of familiarity of the younger generation (CbGI) with the *corre-cutia* form suggests a possible decline in the knowledge and practice of local traditions.

Therefore, in summary, this analysis highlights the complexity of cultural transmission between different groups and generations. Despite acceptance in the Maranhão, caipira, and riverine groups, resistance or lack of knowledge on the part of the younger generation indicates a growing challenge in preserving these linguistic variants. The fact that the researcher needs to insist that the younger generation learn the variant underscores the importance of initiatives that promote the appreciation and practice of traditions. Therefore, it is essential to develop educational strategies that encourage intergenerationality, guarantee the continuity and richness of cultural practices, and ensure that the form 'correcutia' and other variants are not lost over time.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study mapped a wide range of linguistic variants used in the municipality. To this end, a logbook was used, which included metalinguistic comments from the informants. After data collection, the recordings were transcribed and organized in Excel spreadsheets, based on the written and acoustic material obtained during the fieldwork. The maps were created using the cataloged data and a cartographic base. In addition, to represent the variants, the Kiel symbols and the symbolic representation of the cross were used, following the principles of Pluridimensional and Relational Dialectology, aiming to describe and analyze the lexical forms in polymorphic and status maps of the form, complemented by a statistical base.

To complement this analysis, the focus was exclusively on the lower social class (Cb), considering its migratory and contractual context. For this reason, the representation of the cross was simplified to a bar that divides the two generations. It is important to highlight that, in this article, only the variants of question 164 were considered: "a game in which children stand in a circle, while another passes by with an object that he drops behind one of them, and the latter picks up the object and runs away?" After creating the multidimensional maps for each question of the Semantic-Lexical Questionnaire (QSL/ALIB), the variants were described, using the linguistic cartography produced, together with contributions from lexicographic and dialectal studies for the analysis and discussion of the results.

The application of the three-step technique reveals that the different groups studied — people from Maranhão, Rio Grande do Sul, caipiras, and riverside communities — demonstrate linguistic changes, including borrowings among the informants. Even in

spontaneous responses, as evidenced in the three steps of asking, insisting, and suggesting, the informants of Rio Grande do Sul origin do not use the Lexia “chicote queimada” to refer to the game, opting instead for the forms “lenço-atrás” and “corre-cutia”. Furthermore, it was observed that among all the groups studied, the most common linguistic form to name the game was “corre-cutie”, considered the most representative variant. The study is based on the hypothesis that the migration process had a significant influence on the local language, confirmed during the cartographic analyses. The people of Maranhão exert a considerable influence due to their representativeness, in the formation of the local dialectal variety, especially on riverside informants from neighboring regions.

Finally, all the established objectives were fully achieved, highlighting the relevance and legitimacy of the research not only for the academic community but also for the local community and its educational institutions. In addition, it contributes to the recognition and appreciation of the linguistic reality by educators, as well as to the understanding of the impact of cultural influences on the variations of the local Portuguese language. Therefore, this excerpt from the master's dissertation (Araújo, 2023) demonstrates the importance of dialectological studies carried out in the municipality of Formoso do Araguaia, in the state of Tocantins, and throughout the country.

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