Our goal is to describe the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic behavior of the adjective *capaz* (‘able, capable’) in the southern Brazilian Portuguese dialect of Rio Grande do Sul (Gaucho Brazilian Portuguese, henceforth GBP). In Portuguese, *capaz* functions as a common adjective, expressing ability or possibility/probability, as in (1)-(2). However, in GBP, *capaz* also functions as a negative element with a meaning similar to *de jeito nenhum* (‘no way’), as in (3)-(4). As far as we know, this use is completely absent in other Portuguese dialects, in which a sentence as (4) only has the affirmative meaning ‘It is very likely that João will do this job!’.

In GBP, negative *capaz* never appears as a neutral/descriptive negation. Instead, it marks a strong rejection to an utterance either previously expressed or inferable from the linguistic context (cf. (5)-(6)). *Capaz* may appear isolated as a fragment of answer (cf. (5)-(6)) or in a complete sentence (cf. (3)-(4)). When in a sentence, *capaz* necessarily co-occurs with the complementizer *que* on its right side (cf. (3)-(4)). Generally, it also appears with the adverb *bem* on its left (cf. (4), (7)); and with a copula *é* (‘is’) (cf. (8)). The copula may appear without *bem*, but the sentence sounds much better when both items co-occur. In sum, (i) *é, bem* and *que* can co-occur with *capaz*; (ii) *bem* and *que* can co-occur without *é*; (iii) *que* can appear without *é* *bem*; (iv) *bem* and *que* can never be omitted in whole sentences, (v) unless *capaz* appears as a complete isolated element in fragment answers. When *é* and *bem* are present in *capaz*-sentences, they must appear in strict adjacency with each other (cf. (9)) and with *capaz* (cf. (10)); nothing can appear between *é* and *bem* neither between (*é* *bem* and *capaz*). But the adjacency between *capaz* and *que* can be disrupted (cf. (11)). In non-negative uses of *capaz*, the copula undergoes inflection in person and/or in tense (cf. (12)); even in impersonal uses (cf. (13)-(14)), where the copula remains in third person, inflection in tense is still possible. However, in negative use of *capaz*, the copula is invariable, as shown in (13)-(14) where any variation in the copula produces only non-negative readings. Other syntactic properties will be addressed in more detail in the paper. We propose that in GBP *capaz* works as an emphatic negative marker, in the sense of Cavalcante (2012), generated in a functional category in the left periphery of the sentence. *Capaz* is partially similar to post-sentential negative marker *não* in sentences like (15). Both items mark non-neutral “anaphoric” negation: they reject a previously uttered or inferable proposition. But they differ in the fact that post-sentential *não* does not convey an emphatic reading and it is grammatical in non-declarative sentences and (with some restrictions) in embedded sentences. In this regard, *capaz* behaves like non-argumental *nada* (‘nothing’) in sentences like (16), which expresses a negation which is both anaphoric and emphatic and it is acceptable only in matrix declarative clauses. Additional evidences for this analysis are: (i) *capaz* cannot convey negative meaning in embedded and interrogative sentences (cf. (17)); (ii) negative *capaz* does not generate negative concord, but cancels a negation under its scope (cf. (18)). This analysis is similar to the one proposed by Martins (2010) and by Pinto (2010) for locative particles in European Portuguese (EP) in terms of metalinguistic negation, which was also applied by Marcelino (2017) to another possible (emphatic) negative particle: *ruim* (‘bad’) from northeastern Brazilian Portuguese. Syntactically, anaphoric *não* and emphatic *nada* appear in sentence-final position, metalinguistic *cá/lá/nada* in medial (post-verbal) position, while negative *capaz* is always in an initial pre-Cº position. That is so because (i) anaphoric *não* and emphatic *nada* trigger a movement of the whole sentence to a higher functional position above CP (cf. CAVALCANTE, 2012); (ii) EP *cá/lá/nada* trigger verbal movement to Cº and subject movement to TopP (cf. MARTINS, 2010; PINTO, 2010). In the derivation we propose here (cf. (19)), negative *capaz* does not trigger any sentential nor constituent movement: *capaz* does not behave as a head triggering movement, but as a XP, and the Cº head is already fulfilled with *que*. Negative *capaz* is therefore similar to emphatic *ruim*, which appears in a similar configuration.

1. O João é *capaz* de fazer isso. (*João has the ability to do this*)
2. É *capaz* de João fazer isso. (*It is possible/likely that João will do this*)
3. *Capaz* que eu vou na festa da Maria! capable that I go in.the party of.the M. (*In no way I’ll go to Maria’s party!*)
4. É *bem capaz* que o João vai fazer esse serviço! is well capable that the J. go do this job (*In no way João will do this job!*)
5. A: Tu sabia que o Rib’s fechou? (*Did you know that Rib’s was closed?)
   B: *Capaz!* ( = ‘No! Seriously?!’)
(6) A: Acho melhor tu ficar em casa hoje.  
    B: Mas bem capaz!  
        but well capable  
    (‘I think it is better for you to stay home today’)  

(7) Bem capaz que eu vou na festa da Maria!  
    well capable that I go in.the party of.the M.  
    (‘No way I’m going to Maria’s party!’)  

(8) É (bem) capaz que eu vou na festa!  
    is (well) capable that I go in.the party  
    (‘No way I’m going to the party!’)  

(9) *É mesmo/de fato bem capaz que...  
    is really/indeed well capable that  

(10) *É bem mesmo/de fato capaz que...  
    is well really/indeed capable that  

(11) É bem capaz mesmo que...  

(12) Eles são capazes de fazer isso.  
    they are capable of do this.  
    (‘They are able to do it’)  

(13) Era capaz de acontecer um acidente!  
    was capable of happen a accident  
    (‘An accident was likely to happen’; ‘No way an accident would happen!’)  

(14) Seria bem capaz de eu ir na festa.  
    would-be well capable of I go in.the party  
    (‘I could go to the party’; ‘No way I would go...’).  

(15) (Não) quero sair hoje não.  
    neg want 1sg leave today neg  
    (‘No, I don’t want to go out today’)  

(16) A: O João comprou um carro.  
    B: Comprou (um carro) nada!  
    the J. bought a car bought.3sg a car nothing  
    (‘No way he bought a car’)  

(17) (Tuacha que) é capaz que tu vá/vai na festa?  
    you think that is capable that you go/go subj in.the party  
    (only non-negative reading)  

(18) Bem capaz que eu não vou sair hoje!  
    well capable that I neg go leave today  
    (‘No way I’m not going out today!’)  

(19) [YP é [XP (bem) capaz [CP que [IP eu vou [VP ... na festa de Maria ]]]]]

SELECTED REFERENCES:  