TER AND HÀVER IN URUGUAYAN PORTUGUESE

Leonor Simioni
Universidade Federal do Pampa (UNIPAMPA-Jaguarão)
simionileonor@gmail.com

Our goal is to describe the behavior of ter and haver/haber (‘have’) in the variety of Portuguese spoken in the north of Uruguay (Uruguayan Portuguese, henceforth UP). In Brazilian Portuguese (henceforth BP), while ter is a productive form, haver is a lot less frequent, being used mostly in formal/written BP (cf. Avelar, 2006). Ter is not only more frequent, but also more productive: it is an auxiliary (cf. (1)), a modal (cf. (2)), a light verb (cf. (3)) or a lexical verb. As a lexical verb, ter conveys possession (cf. (4)) and forms existential constructions (cf. (5)). Haver, on the other hand, may appear as an auxiliary (cf. (11)) and form existential constructions (cf. (5)).

(1) O João já tinha morado no exterior. ‘John had already lived abroad’
(1) O João já havia morado no exterior.

(2) O João tem que escrever o artigo. ‘John has that write the paper’
(3) O João tem medo de barata. ‘John is afraid of cockroaches’
(4) O João tem vinte livros do Chomsky. ‘John has twenty books by Chomsky’
(5) Havia um livro em cima da mesa. ‘There was a book on the table’
(5) Tinha um livro em cima da mesa.

It is known that in Old Portuguese, haver was used to express possession, being later replaced with ter; later, haver replaced ser in existential constructions, but was, once again, replaced by ter (at least in BP) (cf. Mattos e Silva, 2001).

(6) No havia quem me ganhasse […] ‘There was no one who could beat me’
(7) Pão não havia nunca. ‘There was never any bread’
(8) Chegava lá na escola e havia um veinho ‘Arrived at the school and there was an old guy’
(9) Uma geada que havia que levar um pau […] ‘We had to carry a stick due to the frost’
(10) De escrevê com a tal de caneta que havíamo ‘We wrote with the so-called pen we had’

Weaver, on the other hand, is more versatile; it is mostly used to express possession (cf. (10)), but it can also appear in existential constructions (albeit much less frequently than haver) (cf. (11)), as an auxiliary (cf. (12)), as a modal (cf. (13)) and as a light verb (cf. (14)).

(10) O meu pai tinha um açude ‘My father had a weir’
(11) E tinha aí um lugar fúnebre ‘And there was a funeral home’
(12) Me tenho relacionado com gente que tô bem ‘I have related with fine people’
(13) Eu tenho que dizerte o nome! ‘I have to tell you its name!’
(14) Sempre tive medo de sair do lado do meus pai ‘I was always afraid of leaving my parents’
The analysis reveals that, if the behavior of ter is very similar in BP and UP, there is a significant difference with respect to haver: while in BP its use is scarce and determined by extralinguistic factors, in UP haver is the prototypical form in existential constructions. This observation corroborates recent results that show significant differences between BP’s and UP’s grammars (cf. MUNIZ, 2017), which points to them being two different I-languages, contrary to what is normally assumed (cf. BOTTARO, 2009).

SELECTED REFERENCES: