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THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE HISTORY OF PORTUGUESE GRAMMAR IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

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Résumé

La première femme portugaise à avoir publié une grammaire fut Francisca de Chantal Álvares, auteur du *Breve Compendio da Grammatica Portugueza* (1786). Il faudra attendre plus d'un siècle à d'autres femmes portugaises publier des grammaires. C'est le cas de Berta Valente de Almeida qui, au début du vingtième siècle, s'est distinguée dans le contexte de la production grammaticale, puisque ses travaux sur la grammaire portugaise et latine ont été officiellement approuvés par le gouvernement. À cette époque, Virgínia Gersão a également publié son ouvrage *Gramática das Criancinhas*, louée par l'illustre philologue Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcelos. Sur la base de ces deux derniers auteurs, nous avons l'intention d'explorer le contexte historique dans lequel elles ont vécu, en soulignant l'importance linguistique et historiographique de la *Gramática Prática e muito elementar da Língua Portuguesa* (1916) et *A Gramática das Criancinhas* (1921).

Mots clés : femmes et linguistique, grammairiennes portugaises, Berta Valente de Almeida, Virgínia Gersão

Abstract

The first Portuguese woman to publish a grammar of Portuguese was Francisca de Chantal Álvares, author of the *Breve Compendio da Grammatica Portugueza* (1786). It would take more than a century for other Portuguese women to publish grammars. This is the case of Berta Valente de Almeida, who, at the beginning of the twentieth century, stood out in the circles of grammar production, given that her works on Portuguese and Latin grammar were officially approved by the Government. At this time, Virgínia Gersão also published *A Gramática das Criancinhas*, a work praised by the illustrious philologist Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcelos. Based on the latter two authors, it is our intention to explore the historical context in which they lived, emphasizing the linguistic and historiographic importance of the *Gramática Prática e muito elementar da Língua Portuguesa* (1916) and *A Gramática das Criancinhas* (1921).

Keywords: women and linguistics, female Portuguese grammarians, Berta Valente de Almeida, Virgínia Gersão

INTRODUCTION

Berta Valente de Almeida and Virgínia Gersão were raised toward the end of the Portuguese monarchy, at a time when Republican ideas were emerging, ideas that were based on the value of general education, and particularly female education: «Instruir e educar a mulher foi um dos desígnios do movimento iluminista e liberal, do ideário republicano e mação e dos diversos movimentos feministas» [To instruct and educate women was a shared purpose of the Enlightenment and Liberal movements, of the republican ideology and of the various feminist movements] (Silva 2003, p. 486).

However, and despite this ideal, what actually happened was that the majority of the population did not have access to formal education, and women were kept away from

the public sphere as they had to dedicate themselves to domestic chores, which included taking care of the home, children and husbands.

As a matter of fact, during the nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth century, female education was conceived of and organised around the concepts of marriage and motherhood, with school programs also being adjusted for this purpose.

In this context, which is adverse to the female sex, these two women managed to assert themselves, having published several works in different domains. In this article, we intend to emphasize their grammatical production through the analysis of the *Gramática Prática e muito elementar da Língua Portuguesa* (1916) by Berta Valente de Almeida and *A Gramática das Criancinhas* (1921) by Virgínia Gersão.

Taking into account the criteria established by Gonçalves (2012, p. 414-415), we classify these two works as grammars that are devoted to teaching, which have specific characteristics, such as their dimension, discourse formulation and theoretical approach. These features distinguish them from other grammars in which theoretical reflections about grammatical contents abound.

1. THE AUTHORS

1.1 Berta Valente de Almeida¹

Daughter of João Valente de Almeida and Eulália Gomes de Almeida, Berta Valente de Almeida was born in 1886, in Gondarém, Vila Nova de Paiva, and died in Lisbon, in 1982. She profited from a remarkable educational background, having received with great distinction an education in Classical Philology and Romance Philology at the University of Lisbon's 'Curso Superior de Letras'. It is noteworthy that Almeida was, along with Virgínia Quaresma² (1882-1973), one of the first women to graduate in Humanities in Portugal.

Regarding her career, Berta Valente de Almeida began teaching in private schools during a period when the process of feminisation of the teaching profession had not started yet. In 1907 she started working at the 'Liceu D. Maria Pia'³ as a Portuguese and Latin teacher. This school was later called 'Liceu Garrett' and after that 'Maria Amália Vaz de Carvalho'⁴.

¹ About the author and her work, one can see Costa (s/d) and Kemmler, Coelho and Fontes (2017).

² Virgínia Quaresma was the first Portuguese female journalist, «Escreveu, opinou, polemizou em nome da causa feminista e pela igualdade de direitos; o voto, o direito ao trabalho, o acesso às mesmas profissões que os homens, à administração dos bens, ao divórcio, foram tema dominante dos seus artigos e das páginas dos jornais onde colaborou [...]» [She wrote, gave opinion, argued for the feminist cause and for equal rights. Issues like the vote, the right to work, the access to the same jobs as men, to the administration of property, to divorce were dominant themes of her articles and of the pages of the newspapers in which she collaborated] (Seixas 2010).

³ This school was «[...] fundada pelo Município de Lisboa, em 1885, como estabelecimento de educação geral e profissional destinado a raparigas de origem modesta, passando para a administração do Estado em 1892. [...] com o novo decreto [de 1906], passava a Escola a Liceu, com a designação de Liceu Maria Pia, e iria servir de modelo aos futuros Liceus Femininos» [founded by the Municipality of Lisbon in 1885 as an establishment of general and professional education for girls from a modest background, passing to the state administration in 1892. [...] with the new decree [of 1906] the School turned into a 'Liceu', under the name of Liceu Maria Pia, and would serve as a model for the future female 'Liceus'.] (Carvalho 2008, p. 646).

⁴ Maria Amália Vaz de Carvalho (1847-1921) was a writer and a poet, who dedicated herself to the feminine condition. It is also worth noting that she joined the Academy of Sciences in Lisbon in 1912 along with Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcelos, resulting in the two of them becoming the first Portuguese women to be part of this distinct Academy.

By the 1920s, the women attending this school were predominately from privileged families, and Berta Valente de Almeida was one of a small number of teachers responsible for training young people from a high class background.

Another important milestone in her career was her 1918 appointment to teach Special Methodology in the Classical Philology section of the 'Escola Normal Superior' at the University of Lisbon.

It is also important to point out that, in secondary school, in addition to being a teacher, she also served as the Dean from 1920 to 1922, when she was exonerated at her own request, being praised in the decree which documents her resignation.

Contrary to the norms of the time, Berta Valente de Almeida achieved success in a traditionally male world of publishing school manuals. She published several works, all under the seal of the *Papelaria, Livraria e Tipografia Fernandes*, which can be divided into grammars, reading books, writing manuals and textbooks.

For the study of the Portuguese language, she wrote the *Gramática Prática e muito elementar da Língua Portuguesa* (1916), *Primeiras noções de Gramática Histórica da Língua Portuguesa* (1923), which presented a historical account of the origin and evolution of Portuguese and the *Gramática prática da língua portuguesa* (1917). For Latin Studies, she wrote the pupil's grammar *Gramática prática da língua latina* (s.d.) and the *Livro método de exercícios da língua latina* (1921).

Berta Valente de Almeida was a literate, professional woman, possessing a vast body of knowledge, bequeathing to posterity a considerable number of works, among which we will analyse here the *Gramática prática e muito elementar da língua portuguesa* (1916).

1.2 Virgínia Faria Gersão⁵

Daughter of Augusto Liberato de Figueiredo Gersão, a pharmacist and primary teacher, and of Virgínia da Conceição Bacelar Faria Gersão, a homemaker, Virgínia Faria Gersão was born in Cernache, Coimbra, on July 1, 1896, and died in Coimbra, on November 25, 1974.

She studied in the former 'Escola Normal de Coimbra' and graduated in Romance Philology from the University of Coimbra⁶. She first taught as a teacher at the Escola Normal Primária in Lisbon and later on as a teacher at Liceu Infanta D. Maria in Coimbra, where she taught Portuguese and French. She was a member of the National Assembly from 1945 to 1949 (Braga 2011) and her parliamentary interventions addressed issues such as tuberculosis, vocational technical education, high school reform and private education. In these speeches, she condemned the excess effort and workload required of the students, as well as the excessive number of hours spent in school, thus preventing them from playing and spending time with their families.

In the context of female education, she published several texts in contemporary newspapers, in which she defended the need for women's education so as to favour their insertion into an active life (Pintassilgo and Serra 2009). She also wrote literary works, namely children's plays, as well as works aimed at teaching, such as *A Gramática das Criancinhas* (1921) and the *Geometria das Criancinhas* (1933).

⁵ About the author's life and work, see, among other sources, Castelo (2003) and Souza (2005).

⁶ Vaquinhas (2014, p. 113) mentions that Virgínia Gersão was enrolled in the 'Faculdade de Letras' of the University of Coimbra in the school year of 1915-1916.

2. THE GRAMÁTICA PRÁTICA E MUITO ELEMENTAR DA LÍNGUA PORTUGUESA (1916) AND A GRAMÁTICA DAS CRIANCINHAS (1921)

2.1 Content and structure of the Gramática Prática e muito elementar da Língua Portuguesa (1916)

As the title indicates, this is a practical and elementary grammar, written to be used as a guide for teaching Portuguese grammar. At this time, in Portugal, although the comparative-historical approach dominated, grammarians believed that there were different types of grammars, each having a different purpose.

Adolfo Coelho (1847-1919)⁷, for example, divided grammars into two categories: *grammatica expositiva, descriptiva ou pratica* which «[...] se limita a expor as normas observadas no emprego d'uma lingua numa dada epocha, abstrahindo do estudo das suas transformações [...]» [limits itself to exposing the norms observed in the use of a language in a certain time, not considering the study of its changes] (Coelho 1881, p. 4) and *grammatica historica ou comparativa* which «estuda essas normas em diferentes epochas d'uma lingua on [sic!] em diferentes linguas investigando que leis presidem às suas alterações» [studies these norms in different times of a language in different languages, investigating which laws preside over its changes] (Coelho 1881, p. 4).

In Almeida's grammar, the author seeks to describe the Portuguese language within a certain period, not taking a diachronic perspective to explain facts, or establishing any comparisons with other languages. This choice is easily understood if we consider her purpose and audience, as this grammar was designed to teach Portuguese.

Concerning its internal structure, the *Gramática prática e muito elementar da língua portuguesa*, which has a total of 216 pages, is organised as follows:

	Páginas
Folha de rosto	[I]
Assinatura da autora	[II]
Frontispício	[III]
Introdução	1
1. ^a lição – Das vogais	1
2. ^a lição – Da palavra	4
3. ^a lição – Do substantivo	6
4. ^a lição – Do adjetivo	8
5. ^a lição – Dos nomes numerais	9
6. ^a lição – Do pronome	12
7. ^a lição – Do verbo em geral	17
8. ^a lição – Verbos transitivos, intransitivos, reflexos, passivos e impessoais	19
9. ^a lição – Do advérbio	22
10. ^a lição – Da preposição	26
11. ^a lição – Da conjunção	28
12. ^a lição – Da interjeição	30
13. ^a lição – Do artigo	33
14. ^a lição – Do género e número	35
15. ^a lição – Formação do plural	37
16. ^a lição – Formação do feminino	44
17. ^a lição – Dos modos e dos tempos em geral	49

⁷ Adolfo Coelho is considered the introducer of historical-comparative linguistics in Portugal, with his work *A Língua Portuguesa. Phonologia, Etymologia, Morphologia e Syntaxe*, published in 1868.

18. ^a lição – Dos tempos em especial, número e pessoa	54
19. ^a lição – Paradigmas das 3 conjugações	60
20. ^a lição – Da conjugação perifrástica e verbos irregulares	69
21. ^a lição – Da conjugação reflexa e do verbo acompanhado do pronome <i>o</i>	148
22. ^a lição – Da conjugação na voz passiva	159
23. ^a lição – Do período e da oração. Concordância do sujeito com o verbo	163
Concordância do nome predicativo com o sujeito	169
24. ^a lição – Do grau do adjectivo	169
25. ^a lição – Do apôsto ou continuado	177
Do complemento indirecto	
Dos complementos circunstanciais	
Do agente da passiva	
Do nome predicativo do complemento directo, sua concordância com o respectivo complemento	
Resumo dos complementos	
Do complemento determinativo	
Do vocativo	
Das expressões de realce	
26. ^a lição – Análise gramatical de um período: classificação da oração quanto à forma e quanto ao sentido	188
Regras gerais de ortografia	203
Acentuação gráfica	205
Pontuação	207
Índice	215

Table 1: The internal structure of the *Gramática prática e muito elementar da língua portuguesa*

As one can see in the table, the grammar itself is structured into 26 lessons, through which we can see how a lesson was structured and how this organisation allowed for a fluid, pleasant and uncomplicated reading. The author is concerned with presenting the contents in a gradual way, so the students would only study the following material after having understood the previous contents

Regarding the methodology, Almeida began the explanation of the grammatical contents by presenting examples, which she created, and only after the analysis was complete did she offer the definition of the concept in question. The use of this inductive method required greater involvement and a more active role from the students, forcing them to reflect and draw conclusions through a discovery process. This inverted structure was unusual, as it was more common for grammarians to start explanations by defining the concept and then presenting examples.

Another important aspect of her work is that she ended each lesson with practical exercises so that the students could consolidate the contents learned. As Coelho noted, this strategy allowed the child «[...] um contínuo estímulo da sua intelligencia e o jogo de todas as suas faculdades [...]» [a continuous stimulation of his/her intelligence and of all his/her faculties] (Coelho 1885, p. 17), thus defending a «[...] ensino practico e intuitivo [...]» [practical and intuitive teaching] (Coelho 1885, p. 18).

In relation to the parts of grammar, Berta adopted a tripartite internal structure, in line with Adolfo Coelho's 1868 proposal, focusing on phonetics, morphology and syntax.

Phonetics or phonology is a part of the grammar that studies «como se formaram as palavras, as partes de que se compõem, sons que nelas entram [...]» [how the words are formed, their components, the sounds that are part of them] (Almeida 1916, p. 5). In this part, the author deals with aspects related to vocalism, syllable and accent, previously considered under Prosody.

Morphology «[...] ensina as espécies de palavras que existem, as *formas* que podem tomar segundo o pensamento que querem exprimir [...]» [teaches the types of words that exist, the forms they can take according to the thought they want to express] (Almeida 1916, p. 162), covering, in this part, the study of word classes and their inflection.

The third part of the grammar is syntax, which the author defines as follows:

Quando usamos palavras, usamo-las, pois, em frases ou orações. Quando as dispomos na oração, combinamo-las segundo certas regras e preceitos. O conjunto destas regras e preceitos, que nos ensinam a combinar as palavras em frases e as frases entre si, constituem a parte da Gramática chamada **SINTAXE**. [When we use words, we use them in sentences. When we collocate them in a sentence, we combined them according to certain rules and precepts. All these rules and principles, which teach us to combine words into sentences and sentences together, constitute the part of grammar called Syntax] (Almeida 1916, p. 198)

At this time, orthography was no longer part of the canonical structure of the grammars, thus not constituting a part of it. Nevertheless, Almeida included a small section at the end of the grammar called *Regras gerais de ortografia* (Almeida 1916, p. 203).

2.2 Content and structure of *A Gramática das Criancinhas* (1921)

A Gramática das Criancinhas was first published in 1921 and was dedicated to Virgínia Gersão's nephew Carlos Augusto Gersão Ventura (1916-1992)⁸. This work was based on her dissertation for the state school teaching exam, and it was printed in a second edition in 1932.

This grammar was further adapted and published over four years in the magazine *Os Nossos Filhos* in a series of articles entitled «A Gramática no país das formigas» [The Grammar in the country of ants].

This work contains some paratexts, among which is a letter dated November 11, 1921, written by Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcelos (1951-1925), who was very probably Virgínia Gersão's teacher of Portuguese Philology. The comment of the great philologist was quite positive, characterising the work as «[...] viva e pessoal, bem pensada e bem escrita» [dynamic and personal, well thought out and well written] (Vasconcelos in Gersão 1932, p. [V]), and then adding: «Abri-a, esperando encontrar coisas de valor. Mas encontrei mais: um conjunto útil e doce, realmente valioso» [I opened it, hoping to find things of value. But I found more: a useful sweet and really valuable set] (Vasconcelos in Gersão 1932, p. [V]).

In addition to Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcelos, Joaquim Mendes dos Remédios (1867-1932), who was director of the Faculdade de Letras and Dean of the University of Coimbra, also praised Virgínia Gersão's work, congratulating her on the «[...] idea felicíssima e lindamente executada [...]» [happy and beautifully executed idea] (Remédios in Gersão 1932, p. [VII]).

The grammar is structured into lessons that work as a narrative, in which the characters present the grammatical concepts in a contextualised way, while the author's summation is delivered at the end. The story takes place in a country inhabited by ants, featuring characters such as Joaquinita, Joaquim, the 'formiga-mestra' (ant-master), among others. It was the author's intention that the work be «[...] lida diante da Mãe

⁸ He was a teacher in Escola Secundária Avelar Brotero, in Coimbra.

como um livro de histórias, do Professor como um livro de lição» [read before the Mother as a storybook, and before the Teacher as a lesson book] (Gersão 1932, p. XIII). As one can see, the author adopts a very innovative approach to the teaching of grammar, quite different from the traditional ones⁹, in trying to explain the grammatical contents through imagination, creativity and playfulness.

As the author points out in her introduction to the grammar, «É tam profunda a antipatia que todos os alunos sentem por êsse livro, cujo valor não compreendem, que eu acho indispensável que as *primeiras noções de Gramática* sejam ensinadas brincando [...]» [So deep is the antipathy that all students feel for this book, whose value they do not understand, that I think it is essential that the first notions of Grammar are taught by playing] (Gersão 1932, p. XII). Therefore, Gersão aimed to teach the first notions of grammar in a playful way, motivating the children to learn topics that they usually found tedious.

The author advocates the adoption of the inductive method¹⁰, in which the students participate actively in the construction of knowledge. In this sense, teaching should be done through examples, following the procedures of the natural sciences, which are not focused on memorisation, but instead allow the students to observe, analyse and draw their own conclusions.

Concerning its internal structure, *A Gramática das Criancinhas*, which consists of a total of 144 pages, is organised as follows:

	Páginas
Folha de rosto	[I]
Frontispício	[III]
Carta de Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcelos	[V]
Carta de Mendes dos Remédios	[VII]
Dedicatória	[IX]
Introdução	XI-XVI
1. ^a lição – Necessidade de regras gramaticais. Origem da nossa língua	1
2. ^a lição – O substantivo. Género. Número	5
3. ^a lição – Breves observações sobre o substantivo. O artigo	9
4. ^a lição – O substantivo (Continuação)	14
5. ^a lição – O Adjectivo	20
6. ^a lição – Vantagem de saber ler. O adjectivo. Graus	24
7. ^a lição – Adjectivos (continuação). O superlativo	30
8. ^a lição – A biblioteca da Joaquineta. Numerais	36
9. ^a lição – O jogo das bandeirinhas. Pronomes pessoais	42
10. ^a lição – As descobertas do Joaquim. Pronomes pessoais (continuação)	49

⁹ In her introduction to the grammar, Gersão referred to Charrier (1920, p. 214), who alluded to this method: «les personnes âgées ont étudié la grammaire d'après la méthode dogmatique ou méthode d'autorité. Chaque élève avait "son" *Noël et Chapsal*, un manuel aux notions précises, mais combien sec et rebutant! Les maîtres, dévoués pourtant, ne faisaient rien pour en atténuer l'aridité».

¹⁰ Charrier (1920, p. 215) argues that «l'emploi de la méthode déductive, en grammaire, constitue un non-sens. Placer la règle avant l'exemple, c'est vraiment mettre la charrue devant les boeufs. Sans doute, la méthode déductive convient à quelques enseignements, à celui de la géométrie, par exemple, parce que, là, le professeur part de définitions ou de principes rigoureusement exacts, pour en déduire des corollaires ou des applications. Mais la grammaire, comme la morale, comme les sciences naturelles, est une science d'observation et nécessite l'emploi de la méthode inductive. C'est de l'étude des faits du langage, c'est-à-dire des exemples du livre ou de ceux indiqués par le maître, que doivent se dégager les définitions et les règles. Règles et définitions suivent les exemples, au lieu de les précéder».

11. ^a lição – O Joaquim continua a fazer descobertas. Pronomes possessivos	55
12. ^a lição – A matrícula da Aninhas. Pronomes demonstrativos	59
13. ^a lição – O ébrio. Pronomes relativos	64
14. ^a lição – Mais descobertas dos dois amigos. Pronomes interrogativos	67
15. ^a lição – Na escola do Joaquim. Pronomes indefinidos	69
16. ^a lição – Uma lição do Joaquim. Verbos. Tempos principais	76
17. ^a lição – Os alunos do Joaquim começam a gostar dos verbos. Os tempos secundários	82
18. ^a lição – Modos. Mais descobertas da Joaquinita. O tema verbal geral	90
19. ^a lição – Tempos compostos. O gerúndio e o adjectivo verbal	100
20. ^a lição – Advérbios	105
21. ^a lição – Preposições. O Joaquim resolveu o seu problema	111
22. ^a lição – Uma lição de sintaxe feita pela Joaquinita	116
23. ^a lição – Conjunções. As conjunções coordenativas	124
24. ^a lição – Um bilhete para o Joaquim. Conjunções subordinativas	129
25. ^a lição – Outra lição de sintaxe. A voz passiva. O nome predicativo	136
26. ^a lição – O casamento da Joaquinita. Interjeições	141
Índice	143
Erratas	145

Table 2: The internal structure of *A Gramática das Criancinhas*

As one can see in the table, *A Gramática das Criancinhas* is structured into 26 lessons, in which the author applies a constant and systematic methodology, starting with the examples, so that the students, assuming a more active role, can understand the grammatical concept. Only after this process does the teacher present the systematisation of the concept under analysis, often through schemes.

This grammar only contemplates two parts, morphology and syntax, with a clear highlighting of the treatment of the first one, which can be justified by the target audience of the work. Contrary to tradition, it does not address any aspect of phonology. According to the author, the grammatical studies were essential, since languages, «[...] como produtos sociais que são, muito mais se alterariam se, em todos os países, desde as primeiras escolas, se não ensinasse a *Gramática* [...]» [as social products that they are, would change much more, in all countries, if they did not teach Grammar since primary school] (Gersão 1932, p. XI).

In this sense, she considers that the grammar has a unifying role, allowing the users of the language to speak and write it correctly. To conclude, this is a grammar intended for teaching that was built in a completely innovative way and with a pedagogical objective.

2.3 *The linguistic ideas in the Gramática Prática e muito elementar da Língua Portuguesa (1916) and in A Gramática das Criancinhas (1921)*

A Gramática das Criancinhas starts with a dialogue between the ant-master and Joaquinita, in which the ant-master regrets the misuse that the ants make of the language, championing the necessity of grammar rules to avoid the kind of linguistic diversity that would prevent speakers from understanding each other. Then there is a dialogue in which they reflect on the origins of the Portuguese language and the languages involved in its formation, noting the dynamic nature of languages, in which some words fall into disuse, while others are modified or even created to represent new ideas.

In a sequential and logical way, one moves on to the study of word classes, presenting the essential aspects that characterise them, taking into account the age of the target audience. The classes of words considered, following the classical system, are the noun, the article, the adjective, the numeral, the pronoun, the verb, the adverb, the preposition, the conjunction and the interjection. Berta Valente de Almeida (1916, p. 32), on the other hand, contemplated nine word classes, the noun, the adjective, the article, the verb, the pronoun, the adverb, the preposition, the conjunction and the interjection. Concerning the noun, while Almeida mentioned the division into concrete and abstract nouns, Gersão decided to contemplate just concrete nouns, although she did not explicitly use this designation, leaving aside abstract ones, as she considered that this notion would require a degree of abstraction that children of this age group would not yet be able to grasp. This option to leave aside some grammatical content is explained by the author in the introduction of the work:

Por vezes, nas minhas exposições, não sou completa: quando dou, para citar um só exemplo, a noção do *substantivo*, o substantivo que eu defino é o *substantivo concreto*, aquele que as crianças podem compreender sem dificuldade, e que apercebem por intermédio dos seus sentidos: as pessoas, os animais e as coisas. [Sometimes, in my expositions, I am not complete: when I give, to mention just an example, the notion of the noun, the noun that I define is the concrete noun, one that children can understand without difficulty, and which they perceive through their senses: people, animals and things] (Gersão 1932, p. XIII)

Regarding the variation of nouns and adjectives, Gersão simply identified the variation in gender and number (and also in degree for the adjectives), not presenting, as usual, rules for the formation of feminine and plural or the traditional exceptions for the superlatives, which is understandable if one considers the specificity of this grammar. In Almeida's grammar, as was usual, all these aspects were contemplated.

As far as numerals are concerned, Gersão (1932, p. 36-41) did not integrate them into the noun or the adjective classes, considering them as an autonomous class, contrary to Almeida's classification (1916, p. 9-11). In the specific case of cardinal numerals, Gersão (1932, p. 40) proposed that they be designated as *numerais principais* (major numerals), arguing that they were very close to the Latin originals, which was not the case with the other subclasses of numerals.

Concerning the treatment of the verb, Virgínia Gersão (1932, p. 88) divided the tenses, as for example Ulisses Machado did (1904, p. 71), into *principais*, *primários* ou *absolutos*, (principal, primary or absolute), among which are the *presente*, the *pretérito perfeito* and the *futuro* (present, the past tense and the future), and *secundários*, *relativos* or *históricos* tenses (secondary, relative or historical tenses), where one can find the *pretérito imperfeito*, *pretérito mais-que-perfeito* and the *condicional*.

Regarding the modes, Gersão (1932, p. 97) identified the existence of four modes, indicative, conjunctive, imperative and infinitive, not considering the conditional as a mode. In this regard, the author, in a footnote, explained that this classification was not consensual among the authors¹¹, making her only direct reference to a grammarian, Epifânio da Silva Dias (1881, p. 42), who classified the conditional as a mode¹².

¹¹ For example, the *Gramática Portuguesa* (1913) by José Maria Relvas and the *Grammatica Portugueza dos Lyceus* (1887) by Francisco José Monteiro Leite considered the conditional as a mode, while Ulisses Machado, in the *Grammática Portuguesa* (1904), classified it as a tense.

¹² «Alguns gramáticos, como Epifânio, consideram o *condicional* como um *modo*, e, diga-se de verdade, não me repugna considera-lo como tal» [Some grammarians, like Epifânio, regard the conditional as a mode, and I am not displeased to consider it as such] (Gersão 1932, p. 97).

Dias's choice is also followed by Berta Valente de Almeida, who, in addition to considering the conditional as a mode, also integrated the participle into this group, postulating the following modes: «[...] *Indicativo, Condicional, Imperativo, Conjuntivo, Infinitivo e Particípio*, são formas que os verbos possuem para indicarem de maneira diferente a sua significação, são *modos*» [Indicative, Conditional, Imperative, Conjunctive, Infinitive, and Participle are forms of the verb used to indicate in a different way their meaning, they are modes] (Almeida 1916, p. 52). Gersão (1932, p. 101), along with Ulisses Machado (1904, p. 78), did not follow these two grammarians and considered the participle a verbal adjective, as it derives directly from the verb.

Concerning adverbs, Almeida (1916, p. 24) considered the adverbs of place, time, mode, quantity, doubt, affirmation, negation, and exclusion¹³, whereas Gersão (1932, p. 109-110) added two more subclasses, the adverbs of exclusion and designation, a classification that resembles, for example, the one presented by Monteiro Leite (1887, p. 121-122).

Regarding the study of prepositions, we would like to highlight that, in addition to the exemplification and definitions usually provided, the author was also concerned with presenting several circumstances expressed by the preposition, exploring and exemplifying the relations of possession, time, matter, instrument, price, mode, place, order, among others, with a detail that does not occur in the analysis of the other classes¹⁴.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The *Gramática Prática e muito elementar da Língua Portuguesa* was a work dedicated to elementary education, which would serve as a basis for the publication of the *Gramática Prática da Língua Portuguesa*, published one year later, in 1917, which was a more developed version of the grammar studied in this paper, designed for secondary education and officially approved for use in schools. Almeida reveals a didactic concern when structuring her work into lessons, presenting abundant exemplification and proposing, at the end of each lesson, practical consolidation exercises.

A *Gramática das Crianças* presented a completely innovative formulation, combining learning with play and imagination and it was as an attempt to overcome the aridity associated with grammar studies. As the text was created to be used in the first years of school, the author intentionally left out some metalinguistic concepts, considering them to be too complex for the age group the work was designed for, arguing that they should only be approached in a second grammar course (Gersão 1932, p. XIV).

In this sense, and based on the criteria established by Gonçalves (2012, p. 414-415) for the analysis of school grammar in Portugal, we can conclude that these two works are grammars that have a shorter format, an informative title about the level of education the works are destined for (elementary education), a brief presentation of the fundamental concepts, an illustration of contents through examples, inclusion of practical exercises and the absence of a critical apparatus that would allow the

¹³ Although he listed only these seven subclasses of adverbs, in the explanation he presented for their meanings, he also referred to the adverb *eis*, used to designate (which often appeared to be classified as an adverb of designation): «Para apontar, designar: *eis*» [To point out, designate: *eis*] (Gersão 1932, p. 24).

¹⁴ See, for example, the explanation: «Se tu vieres comigo *desde* o Porto *até* Coimbra, *desde* indica a origem, o ponto de partida (e *até*, como já disse, o *térmo* da viagem)» [If you come with me from Porto to Coimbra, from indicates the origin, the point of departure (and to, as I said, the end of the trip)] (Gersão 1932, p. 113).

discussion of concepts or theories. They are, therefore, two didactic works, aimed at the elementary teaching of Portuguese grammar.

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