In this poster, we shall analyze the unconventional segmentation of written words in Brazilian Portuguese (henceforth, BP), particularly, two types of them: (i) hyposegmentation between clitics and words, as “denovo” (“de novo” – again), and (ii) word hypersegmentation, as “de mais” (“demais” – too much). Hyposegmentation means the lack of a graphic boundary between the clitic and the word. Hypersegmentation creates a space within the word. In this case, the segmented syllable can be related, according to the phonic chain, to a clitic in Portuguese. To phonological studies, the notion of segmentation is important, for instance, to investigate the prosodic status of clitics. Clitics can be prosodized more or less internally to the prosodic word. The distinction between clitics (proclitics or enclitics to its host) and syllables (initial or final) is relevant to define if clitics are (or not) different than words and affixes. Depending on the approach, clitics are related to affixes, to independent words or to a specific prosodic constituent, as Nespor and Vogel (2007) point out. These characteristics set the clitics apart as units which are hard to formalize in the prosodic structure. In this regard, as to the manner clitics and their host word form a prosodic unit, it is discussed whether they constitute a specific prosodic domain, the clitic group (NESPOR AND VOGEL, 2007) or the composite group (VOGEL, 2009), or, yet, whether the clitic can be integrated into other levels of prosodic hierarchy such as the phonological phrase or the prosodic word (SELKIRK, 2004). In different languages, favorable evidence is found for each one of the mentioned propositions. Still, since the propositions are not consensual, clitic prosodization remains an open question in Prosodic Phonology. The answer to this question is deeply important, since the basic assumption of prosodic theory is the idea of universality of prosodic information. In other words, the way clitics form a prosodic unit should be predictable. Within this framework, we propose an analysis of prepositional clitics’ hyposegmentation and words’ hypersegmentation in BP. We aim to identify the prosodization of clitics and thereby establish a relationship between phonological structures and written words.

The analyzed material comprises 266 written texts produced by students attending the junior high school at a public school in Brazil. The written texts belong to the “Banco de Dados de Escrita do Ensino Fundamental”, organized by professors of the State University of São Paulo (UNESP), and are freely available at: http://www.convenios.grupogbd.com/redacoes/Login. From this material, we have extracted unconventional word segmentation data involving clitics and syllables which are potential prepositional clitics, as illustrated earlier. As to the material and the relevant data, it is important to notice that the spellings were produced during writing activities at school, thus not being results obtained by controlled experiments created exclusively to observe a given linguistic phenomenon. The analyses set forth about the clitics’ spelling and evidence of the prosodic functioning of clitics depart from a set of assumptions based on phenomena found in speech and observable in writing. These hypotheses are based on a theoretical assumption about the relationship between orality and writing: the alphabetic writing can be defined as a system whose main characteristic would be the phonetic-phonological representation, though imperfect, of language. From this point of view, the phonetic-phonological representation ensures that orality is present in writing (CORREA, 2013). This perspective leads us, on one hand, to assume the existence of an intrinsic relation between orality and writing and, on the other hand, to diverge from a perspective according to which characteristics of orality cause an undesired interference in written texts (PINTO, 1997). As a consequence, the adopted perspective about the relationship between
orality and writing defines our approach to written material as being relevant to phonological analysis. In addition, we have adopted another important theoretical assumption for prosodic structure formation. The constitution of prosodic domains is related to the interface of phonology with morphology, syntax and semantic information, although it does not mean that the prosodic constituents are necessarily isomorphic to other grammatical constituents. Thus, we consider both phonological information and information about other grammatical components in the word segmentation which we have analyzed. This interaction between grammatical information of different natures is relevant to the investigation of clitic prosodization.

In a set of 266 texts, we have identified 73 unconventional segmentations, being 23 hyposegmentations (a prepositional clitic joined to a word, as “concerteza” – “com certeza” [for sure]) and 50 hypersegmentations (a pretonic syllable written as a possible prepositional clitic, such as “com migo” – “comigo” [with me]). In Table 1, we present the number of unconventional spellings for each identified clitic. Regarding the results, we point out the tendency for hypersegmentation. In other words, pretonic syllables are written as clitics by students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Clitic</th>
<th>de (of)</th>
<th>em (in)</th>
<th>com (with)</th>
<th>na (in the)</th>
<th>da (of the)</th>
<th>do (of the)</th>
<th>pra (to)</th>
<th>no (in the)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hyposegmentation</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypersegmentation</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The prosodic characteristic of the found segmentation data is, for one, the clitic being integrated in the prosodic word in hyposegmentation and, for another, the relative autonomy of pretonic syllables in hypersegmentation. These characteristic, type-specific targets investigated become relevant if compared to the type of segmentation which often occurs at the beginning of schooling in Brazil. In children’s texts, other forms of joining and separating words are observed, such as hyposegmentation between several prosodic words ("botamabaío" – “bom tomar banho” [good to take a shower]) and hypersegmentation of one word into two metrical feet ("brica deirá" – [kidding]), which do not match any words in BP. These targets suggest the relevance of constituents composed of more than one prosodic word (such as phonological phrases) for hyposegmentation and smaller than a prosodic word (such as the metric foot) for hypersegmentation when analyzing children’s writing data. In our data, differently from children's writing data, the main features observed are the prosodic word domain and the clitic prosodization which strictly imply a relationship between phonology and morphosyntax.

Returning to the results, out of the 73 unconventional spellings seen in Table 1, we have selected for a detailed analysis those 34 referring to the spelling of the clitic “de” (of) and the pretonic syllable “de”, since “de” is the most common clitic in the analyzed texts. These unconventional spellings represent 46.57% of the data. The spellings are presented in Table 2, followed by the number of occurrences in parentheses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hyposegmentation</th>
<th>dinovo (2x), denovo (3x), dela (3x), devolta, divez</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypersegmentation</td>
<td>de mais (12x), de ele (4x), de pois (3x), des de, desis de, de sero, de se</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all cases of hyposegmentation, the clitic is joined to the word on its right. This spelling reflects the fact that clitic prosodization occurs to the right of the host in BP. In comparative work between unconventional word segmentation in BP and in European Portuguese (hereinafter EP), Cunha
(2010) shows that clitics are joined to the host following the syntactic direction of each variety of Portuguese. In the case of EP, clitics are joined to the word on their left, as in: "parace_comer" ("parace_comer" – [to eat you]). In BP, in contrast, all clitics are joined to the word on their right, as exemplified in our data. We point out that hyposegmentations in our data form words whose structure, in terms of strong and weak syllable distribution, is possible and recurrent in BP. In hypersegmentations data, the segmentation of the pretonic syllable tends to occur at the left boundary of the word, resulting in a trochee foot after the syllable. The constitution of a trochee is a primary characteristic of a prosodic word in BP (BISOL, 2000). In these hypersegmentations, at least one part of the written word corresponds to a word of language (cf. "de" and "mais" in "demais" – [too much]). Based on the analysis of “de” (of), we argue that the floating between joining and separating the clitic unconventionally emphasizes: (a) a more dependent syntactic-semantic relationship between the clitic and its host (as in “denovo” [again]), once they form a prepositional phrase which works as a time expression) and (b) the prosodic relation between the pretonic syllables in a word, in which the pretonic syllable seems to be more independent, as if it were external to the word. The comparison between both data types provides evidence for a relation of intermediate independence between clitic and host, meaning, in other words, that the prosodic dependency of a clitic in regard to its host is defined by the syntactic relation between both of them. This prosodic dependency is central to the hypothesis of this research: clitics can be more or less independent of the host, so that the prosodization of a clitic preposition occurs at a different prosodic domain than a pronoun prosodization in BP, for instance. Further investigation steps, such as conducting an experiment and speech perception, should confirm or refute our current explanatory hypothesis.

**Keywords:** Clitic; Prosodic Word; Acquisition of writing; Brazilian Portuguese.

**References**


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