

***Nunca* and other aspects of negation in Kalunga Portuguese**

Ana Paulla Braga Mattos

Aarhus University

This paper investigates the use of negative markers in Kalunga Portuguese and aspects of negation phenomena in this variety. Kalunga has several types of sentential negation: preverbal, discontinuous and post-verbal negation. The distribution of negative indefinites and negative predicates in Kalunga is also discussed, as well as the use of *nunca* ‘never/not’ functioning as a negative temporal adverb, as opposed to its use as a negative sentential marker. All these phenomena are investigated from a diachronic perspective in order to discuss whether they are remnants from Old Portuguese or new developments in Kalunga. The results show that: the use of discontinuous and post-verbal negation strategies in Kalunga appears to follow general patterns of Brazilian Portuguese varieties, especially of Afro-Portuguese varieties; *nunca* ‘never/not’ functioning as a negative sentential marker seems to be a common grammaticalisation process in creoles and some other contact varieties; and the co-occurrence of *nem* ‘nor’ and *ninguém* ‘nobody’ with other negative markers in preverbal position is attested in Old Portuguese, but not frequently, and mostly in plays. This suggests that this phenomenon in Kalunga could be the result of a retention of features that occurred in (vernacular) Old Portuguese combined with new developments.

Keywords: *Nunca* ‘never’, negative marker, Kalunga Portuguese, Afro-variety, negation.

1. Introduction

This paper deals with negative strategies in Kalunga Afro-Portuguese, a language variety spoken in the remnant *quilombo*¹ ‘maroon community’ of Kalunga, located in a relatively isolated area in the state of Goiás, Brazil (for more on Kalunga Afro-Portuguese, see Mattos 2016; 2019; Mattos *to appear*).

¹ According to the *Fundação Cultural Palmares*, the definition of *quilombo* is a community formed by “descendants of enslaved Africans that retained subsistence and religious cultural traditions through the centuries” (www.palmares.gov.br, my translation). For a historical account on the term, see e.g. Martiniano (1998, ch. 1).

Negation is a core phenomenon in languages. In the field of language contact, studies such as Schneider (2000), Schwegler (1996, 2018), and Sessarego (2017) have discussed the genesis of varieties tracing negation constructions in creole languages and vernacular varieties. The debate relates to whether parts of the grammar of post-colonial languages, especially in more isolated areas, are the result of contact effects, language-internal development, or language retention, and whether there are typical patterns of negation in creolisation.

The aim of this paper is to provide new data on negation from an Afro-Portuguese variety, Kalunga Portuguese, and to describe the general patterns of negation constructions in declarative sentences in the language in a cross-linguistic perspective, with particular focus on contact languages. Kalunga appears to display a number of interesting phenomena in this realm. Phenomena such as negation types and negative indefinites in combination with negative markers are discussed for Kalunga. In addition, the paper describes and analyses the common and ‘uncommon’ uses of *nunca* in Kalunga, with ‘uncommon’ meaning rare or unattested in other Brazilian Portuguese (BP) varieties. This brings new insights to the phenomenon of negative sentential markers in Portuguese varieties and contact languages. Moreover, the paper aims to account for the origins of these negative constructions to help understand the genesis of Kalunga Portuguese and, possibly, other varieties spoken by populations of African descent in the New World.

The data is based on a corpus of spoken language collected in the two most isolated villages in the Kalunga community: Vão de Almas and Vão do Moleque. I use examples from my recordings and field notes from research trips to the villages made in 2013, 2014 and 2017, during which I conducted ethnographic fieldwork, including sociolinguistic interviews. In 2013 and 2014, I collected data from the oldest people in the villages. During my trip in 2017, I gathered language data from young people as well. Unless specified, all the examples presented in this paper are from the data I collected in Kalunga. All the names of persons were changed to preserve the speakers’ anonymity. All the research was conducted following the pertinent ethical guidelines and codes.

The paper is organised as follows: Section 2 contains a brief introduction to Kalunga. Section 3 is an overview of the theories and typology on negation, with focus on the literature of Portuguese varieties and Afro varieties. Section 4 presents constructions in Kalunga, including sentential negation types and the distribution of negative markers. Section 5 provides a description, analysis and modelling of the semantics of *nunca*, an especially interesting negator in Kalunga. Section 6 presents a detailed examination of historical records in order

to shed light on the genesis of these negative constructions, i.e. to investigate whether these constructions are the result of language contact or language-internal developments, or retentions from Old Portuguese. Section 7 presents my concluding remarks.

2. Kalunga

Kalunga is a large rural community formed by many villages, and *Fundação Palmares* – a Brazilian government institution – legally recognises it as a *remanescente de quilombo* ‘maroon remnant community’. Vão de Almas and Vão do Moleque are geographically and socially very isolated villages within this area. The area is very hard to access and, for example, many houses still lack electricity. Figure 1 (Mattos, *to appear*) presents a map that indicates the location of the state of Goiás. It indicates the position of Kalunga (in red) and other recognised *quilombola* ‘maroon areas’ in Brazil (in blue).



Figure 1: Kalunga, the state of Goiás and *quilombola* ‘maroon communities’ in Brazil (Mattos, *to appear*)

In Figure 2 (Mattos, *to appear*), the map indicates the position of Kalunga and the villages in which I conducted fieldwork (Vão de Almas and Vão do Moleque). It also indicates the state of Goiás and the three municipalities where

the Kalunga community is officially considered to be located for administrative purposes.

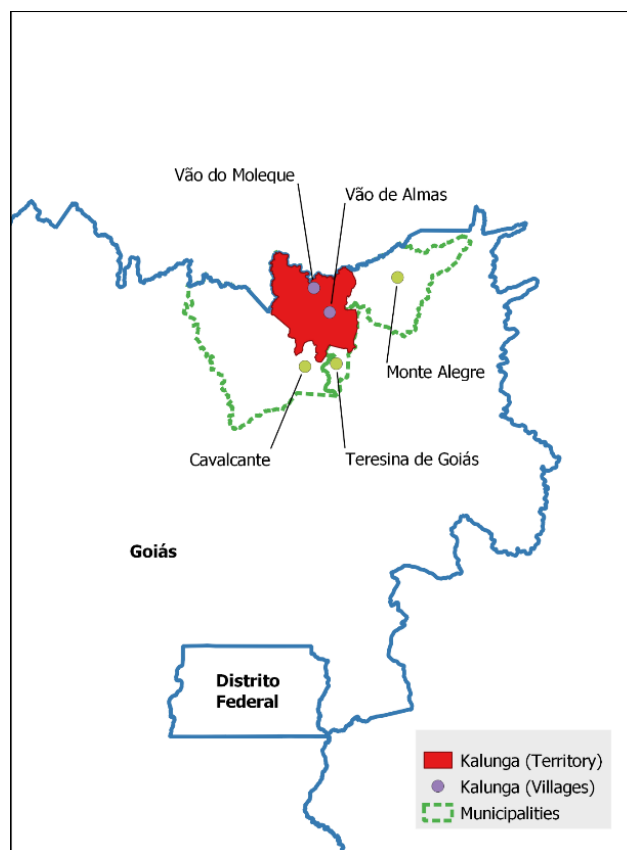


Figure 2: Kalunga: the villages Vão de Alma and Vão do Moleque (Mattos, *to appear*)

3. Theory and typology of negation

In this section, I briefly present the most prominent types of negation strategies found in natural languages from a typological perspective, as well as observed patterns of evolution of negation in the languages of the world. I focus on the negation systems found in Portuguese varieties, in order to facilitate the description and analysis of the negative sentences in Kalunga in Sections 4 and 5.

Every natural language has at least one way of expressing negation, although the way in which propositions are negated in different languages varies a good deal. The typology of negative sentences has been the subject of a

number of studies (see, e.g., Dahl 1979; Payne 1985; Forest 1993; Honda 1996; Miestamo 2000, 2005; Givón 2001).

The term “standard negation” was coined by Payne (1985), and it refers to the basic strategy that languages use for negating declarative verbal main clauses. Payne (1997) distinguishes between two main types of negative strategy: clausal negation and constituent negation. Although the two usually have similar semantic effects, clausal negation is more commonly found in languages than constituent negation. In a typological framework overview on negation, Miestamo (2007: 552) claims that “negation shows complex interaction with many aspects of meaning and structure” and presents different types and terminologies of negation systems as used in the literature. He divides negation into two general types: symmetric and asymmetric constructions. In symmetric constructions, there will not be any structural difference between negative and affirmative statements, apart from the negative markers; whereas in asymmetric constructions, there will be other changes in the sentence structure, such as the introduction of a copula or the deverbalisation of lexical verbs. He also deals with double (or discontinuous) negative markers. He defines discontinuous negative strategies² as “negative constructions where negation is expressed by (at least) two negative markers appearing on opposite sides of the verb” (Miestamo 2007: 555).

According to data presented in WALS (the *World Atlas of Language Structures*, Dryer and Haspelmath 2013) and APICS (the *Atlas of Pidgin and Creole Language Structures*, Michaelis *et al.* 2013), the use of a negative particle is the most common strategy for negating declarative sentences. In relation to sentential negation, some languages have the negative marker in preverbal position. Other languages have the negative marker in post-verbal position; while others have double negation (in WALS) or bipartite negative markers (in APICS), both referring to embracing or discontinuous negation as presented by Miestamo (2007). This refers to the presence of at least one particle before and one particle after the verb. The phenomenon of discontinuous negation appears in 10.28% of the 1,157 languages analysed in WALS, and in 7.9% of the 76 creole and pidgin languages analysed in APICS. In some languages, such as Fa d’ Ambô, the two markers have to occur simultaneously for the negative clause to be grammatically correct (Vellupilai 2015: 498). In

² Due to ambiguity in the literature with regard to the use of the nomenclature “double negation”, I will refrain from using this term here to refer to NEG VP NEG (see Example 2). I use *discontinuous* or *embracing* negation when negative elements are found around the VP or around the finite verb.

some others, such as BP, the two particles may or may not occur simultaneously (see details in Section 3.2).

The three sentential negative strategies – preverbal negation (NEG VP), discontinuous or embracing negation (NEG VP NEG), and post-verbal negation (VP NEG) – are presented, respectively, in Examples (1)–(3), where negative markers are given in **bold** type.

- (1) *Gagonusa* **lo** *ga-loomb-idi* *giluungu* (Mbala)
 woman NEG 1-ask-PRF gourd
 ‘The woman has not asked for the gourd’
 (Ndolo 1972: 75, cited in Devos & Van der Auwera 2015)
- (2) *Amu* **na** *po* *fe-f* (Fa d’Ambô)
 1SG NEG can make-NEG
 ‘I am not able to do it’
 (Post 2013)
- (3) *Na-kok-í* *ko-kend-a* *na* *ndakó* *nayé* **té** (Lingala)
 1SG-can-PRS 15³-go-INF to house POSS NEG
 ‘I cannot go to her house’
 (Meeuwis 1998: 40, cited in Devos & Van der Auwera 2015)

Example (1) is from Mbala, a Bantu language, and it represents a case of preverbal negation in which the negative marker, **lo** in (1), appears before the VP. In this paper, I refer to this type of strategy as NEG1. Example (2) is from Fa d’Ambô, and it represents discontinuous, embracing or bipartite negation, in which there are at least two sentential negators, **na** and **f**. In (2), the first precedes the verb and the second negative marker is in sentence-final position and does not reverse the sentence polarity. I refer to this strategy type as NEG2. Example 3 is from Lingala, also a Bantu language, and it represents post-verbal negation and sentence-final⁴ negation, when the negative marker, **té** in (3), occurs only at the end of the sentence. This is referred to as NEG3. The only distinction between the three negation types is the position of the negative marker in relation to the verb. In other words, the classification of the negative

³ The number in the gloss refers to noun classes (Devos & Van der Auwera 2015: 207).

⁴ In this paper, whenever I refer to post-verbal negation, I am referring to any case in which the negative marker comes after the verb, which may include sentence-final position.

morpheme type (affixes, clitics or independent particles) is not taken into account with regard to this distinction in this paper.

3.1. Negation in diachrony: Jespersen's cycle

The three types of sentential negation (NEG1, NEG2 and NEG3) presented in the previous section may represent different stages of what is known as Jespersen's Cycle (Jespersen 1917). The term was coined by Dahl (1979: 88), and it refers to a process of language change involving three stages. The steps in this diachronic process start with NEG1 in its first stage. Then a preverbal negation language incorporates a post-verbal element, with the pragmatic purpose of reinforcing, or emphasising, the first element (NEG2, second stage). Finally, the original preverbal negative element disappears, leaving only the post-verbal element (NEG3, third stage). The sources of new negative markers that are incorporated in the second stage are usually negative answer particles, such as *no*; negative words, such as *nothing*, *nowhere*, *never*; and minimisers such as French *pas* 'step', *point* 'dot', or *goutte* 'drop'. Other sources may be old negative markers, partitives and inchoative elements (Devos and Van der Auwera 2015: 232).

One well-known example of a language where this process has taken place is French. First, the negator *ne* was the sentential negator used in preverbal position. Second, *pas* was incorporated into negative sentences as a post-verbal marker, and it is now used in combination with *ne*, as in *ne...pas*. Today, only *pas* is used as the only sentential negator in informal/colloquial speech. Devos and Van der Auwera (2015: 261), in an investigation of double and triple negation in Bantu languages, argue that this language family is going through the stages of Jespersen's Cycle. In BP, all the three types of negation (NEG1, NEG2 and NEG3) are attested synchronically. However, there is no consensus among researchers of BP as to whether these attestations represent three transitional stages of Jespersen's Cycle.

Furtado da Cunha (2007) argues that the presence of the three preverbal, post-verbal and discontinuous negatives in synchronic variation in BP represents a change in process that follows Jespersen's Cycle. She affirms that in discontinuous negation, the post-verbal negator started as a strategy to reinforce the preverbal negator, which becomes phonologically weakened and, therefore, loses the negative content. Moreover, she argues that these three forms made their appearance at different points in time in the past. According to her observations, discontinuous and post-verbal strategies are predominantly

manifested in spoken discourse, meaning that they are new patterns that have not yet been incorporated into the written language. In addition, she affirms that NEG1 is the most frequent strategy both in speech and writing, and that the use of NEG2 and NEG3 has some contextual constraints, which would indicate a linguistic change towards the grammaticalisation of NEG2 and NEG3, respectively.

Teixeira de Sousa (2015), by contrast, argues that NEG2 and NEG3 in BP have different readings that follow syntactic and/or semantic/pragmatic constraints, and that consequently they do not represent the same phenomenon or stages in development. Along the same lines, Schwenter (2016: 432) claims that “there is no clear evidence from any BP variety of change in progress of the type NEG1 > NEG2 > NEG3”, as the occurrence of the three negation types synchronically does not necessarily indicate a representation of the diachronic process. In addition, Cavalcante (2012) argues that the post-verbal marker in BP does not encode the emphasis or reinforcement of a weakened preverbal negator. Schwegler (1996, 2018) has voiced similar views. These authors defend the idea that NEG1, NEG2 and NEG3 are structurally different, and the development in BP is judged to be different from what has happened in French.

In the light of these different opinions, it remains unclear what the most plausible reason for the emergence of this phenomenon in BP, as well as in other contact language varieties, is (see Schwegler 2018 for Afro-Iberian varieties and the Spanish-lexifier creole Palenquero of Colombia). More on this discussion is given in Section 6.1.

3.2. Negation in Portuguese varieties: an overview

Negation in Portuguese varieties, especially in BP varieties, has been widely studied. The studies cover aspects of negation at the constituent level and at the sentential level, dealing with the distribution of negative markers, negative scope, negative concord, polarity, and canonical (NEG1) and non-canonical (NEG2 and NEG3) negation forms under various pragmatic, syntactic and sociolinguistic perspectives (e.g. Schwenter 2005, 2016; Cavalcante 2007, 2012; Furtado da Cunha 2007; Teixeira de Sousa 2015; Schwegler 2018). This section presents an overview of sentential negation strategies, negative markers and negative concord in declarative constructions in BP varieties.

Portuguese is classified as a symmetric negation system in Miestamo’s (2007) classification, since there is no syntactic change in the sentence to make an affirmative sentence into its negative counterpart. As Examples (4) and (5)

show, the only difference between the sentences in (4) and in (5) is the negative marker *não* ‘no’.

(4) *Eu vim pra cá* (Portuguese)
 I come.PST.PRF to here
 ‘I came here’

(5) *Eu não vim pra cá* (Portuguese)
 I NEG come.PST.PRF to here
 ‘I didn’t come here’

3.2.1. Sentential negation strategies

The canonical negation strategy in Portuguese is the “negative morpheme *não* ‘no’ in preverbal position in simple declarative main clauses (NEG VP/NEG1)” (Schwenter 2016: 426). This is the most frequent form in BP and European Portuguese. It is structurally simpler than the other types of negation, and it has the least contextual constraints⁵. Sentences (6) to (8), which are constructed examples, illustrate the three sentential negation types in BP.

(6) (NEG VP) *Carlos não/num vem hoje* (NEG1)

(7) (NEG VP NEG) *Carlos não/num vem hoje não* (NEG2)

(8) (VP NEG) *Carlos vem hoje não* (NEG3)
 All meaning: ‘Carlos is not coming today.’

Studies like Furtado da Cunha (2007), Teixeira de Sousa (2011), Cavalcante (2012) and Schwegler (1991, 2018), just to mention a few, discuss the differences in meaning between these three types of negative sentences with a focus on NEG3, which is used less often than the others. These studies recognise the existence of the three types of negation in many varieties of spoken Portuguese, and point to syntactic, semantic/pragmatic and discourse-related differences between the three types. There is an association between the

⁵ For the various studies available on the three types of negation strategies in BP, see, e.g., Schwegler 1991, Schwenter 2005, Furtado da Cunha 2007 and Teixeira de Sousa 2015; on discontinuous negation in European Portuguese, see e.g. Hagemeyer and Santos 2004 and Peres 2013.

frequency of use of each negation strategy and sociolinguistic factors such as age, region, and the nature of the specific language varieties (e.g. written/spoken, vernacular/standard, Afro/non-Afro).

NEG2 is in general more frequent than NEG3. Goldnadel *et al.* (2013), analysing data from the southern region of Brazil, have discovered that NEG3 is extremely rare or not used at all in their data. Furtado da Cunha (2007: 1643), analysing data from the northeast of Brazil, shows that NEG3 appears in 13.3% of the negative tokens, NEG2 appears in 20.6%, and NEG1 appears in 66.1% of the cases. Cavalcante (2009) analysed data from Afro-Brazilian communities in the southeast of Bahia (northeast of Brazil), and discovered that the frequency of use of NEG1 is lower while the usage of NEG2 and NEG3 is higher in communities of African descent than in other communities. Even so, NEG1 is the most common type in the Afro communities as well. He also discovered that age plays a role in the use of NEG3; the oldest group uses NEG3 more often than the youngest group.

The restructuring of negation patterns is common among the world's languages. Other Romance languages have also introduced a post-verbal negation strategy in their system, notably French. What makes BP an interesting case, alongside some (Afro-)Spanish vernacular varieties spoken in Latin America (Schwegler 2018), is that the three strategies coexist, and that one type does not seem to replace another in an ongoing linguistic process like that involved in Jespersen's Cycle.

3.2.2. Negative markers

According to Perini (2005: 86), there are apparently two words that function as standard sentential negative markers in Portuguese: *não* 'no' and *mal*⁶ 'barely'. There are other items that semantically resemble these two, but they behave differently syntactically. Here are some other negative words:

- i. the adverbs *nunca* 'never', and *jamais* 'ever';
- ii. the conjunction and adverb *nem* 'nor';
- iii. the quantifiers *nada* 'nothing' and *ninguém* 'nobody'.

A variant of the standard negative marker *não* 'no' is *num* 'no'. *Num* 'no' is an unstressed form, and it only occurs in preverbal position. *Num* is the default

⁶ For a discussion of *mal* 'barely' as a sentential negator and/or an approximate adverb, see e.g. Schwenter (2016: 427).

negative marker in many varieties of BP. In an analysis of Afro communities in Bahia, the use of *num* ‘no’ in preverbal position amounted to 96% of the cases (Cavalcante 2007). Literacy and level of education are factors that play a role in the use of *num*, since *não* ‘no’ would be preferred in formal contexts.

Nem is considered a negative adverb and conjunction that coordinates elements that carry negative meaning (Neves 2000), along the lines of ‘neither/nor’ in English. According to Marques and Pezatti (2016), *nem* carries the semantics of negative words (negative polarity) and expresses emphasis, along the lines of ‘not even’ in English.

3.2.3. Negative concord

Languages that express a semantically single negation with both a sentential negator and a negative adverb, pronoun or determiner are called negative concord languages (Van der Auwera and Van Alsenoy 2016: 473–474). In such languages, two negators do not reverse the sentence polarity. Some languages, such as Russian, have negative indefinite pronouns that always co-occur with predicate negation. In some other languages, for example Spanish, negative indefinite pronouns may or may not co-occur with another negative word depending on their position in a sentence. These languages have a mixed behaviour, according to Dryer and Haspelmath’s (2013) classification.

Schwenter (2016: 433) claims that Portuguese is a negative concord language and that the presence of negative indefinites like *nada* ‘nothing’, *nunca* ‘never’ and *ninguém* ‘nobody’ in post-verbal position requires another negator before the verb to make the sentence grammatically correct. However, he acknowledges that constructions with negative indefinites in post-verbal position without a preverbal negator have also become common in colloquial BP. In addition, he states that negative indefinites in preverbal position cannot co-occur with another preverbal negative word (Schwenter 2016: 433).

4. Negative constructions in Kalunga

Like most other natural languages, Kalunga has several ways of expressing negation. In my discussion of the general typological aspects of negation in Kalunga, I mainly follow Payne (1985) and Miestamo (2000, 2005). For my description and analysis of Kalunga, I take a typological perspective, and

compare Kalunga with other Portuguese varieties, relating to the vast amount of studies on negation, especially in spoken BP varieties.

Kalunga distinguishes between clausal and constituent negation, like other Portuguese varieties. The most common negation pattern strategy in my sample for Kalunga is the negation marker *num* ‘no’ in preverbal position.

4.1. Negation types (NEG1, NEG2 and NEG3)

Kalunga has three types of sentential negation (NEG1, NEG2 and NEG3) that are also attested in BP and in Afro-Spanish varieties. In Kalunga as well as the other varieties of Portuguese, the most frequent construction is the preverbal negation (NEG1). In terms of frequency of use of the three negation strategies, Afro varieties in Bahia (Cavalcante 2009: 253) and Kalunga follow general patterns of other BP varieties: NEG1 is the most frequently used type, followed by NEG2 and then NEG3. What distinguishes the Afro-Portuguese varieties (including Kalunga) from the other BP varieties is that the frequency of use of NEG2 and NEG3 in Kalunga and Afro varieties in Bahia is higher than in other BP varieties.

In my data, NEG1 occurs 63%, NEG2 25% and NEG3 12% of the times. For comparative reasons with Cavalcante (2009), I only considered in this analysis the use of the canonical negative marker *não/num* ‘no’ in declarative sentences (for more methodological details of this analysis, see Mattos 2016).

4.2. Negative quantifiers and adverbs

In Kalunga – as in other BP varieties – there are a number of negative indefinite pronouns, negative quantifiers and adverbs like *ninguém* ‘nobody’, *nenhum(a)* ‘none’, *nada* ‘nothing’, *nunca* ‘never’ and *nem* ‘nor’. In relation to negative concord in Kalunga, negative quantifiers and adverbs may or may not co-occur with the sentential negator. However, Kalunga Portuguese does not follow all the patterns described by Schwenter (2016) for the Portuguese language (see Section 3.2). Example (9) confirms Schwenter’s (2016) observation that a negative sentence with a negative indefinite in post-verbal position without another negative in preverbal position is possible. However, Examples (10) to (15) show that negative concord in Kalunga differs from the options for negative concord in Portuguese. They contain sentences in which there are negative indefinites co-occurring with another negative word in preverbal position, as

well as sentences with multiple negative words co-occurring in a sequence. The spelling in these examples is adjusted to Portuguese orthography.

- (9) *Ele viu ninguém lá*
 he see.PST.PRF nobody there
 ‘He saw nobody there’
- (10) *Ninguém num viu*
 nobody NEG see.PST.PRF
 ‘Nobody saw it’
- (11) *Ninguém não veio não*
 nobody NEG come.PST.PRF NEG
 ‘Nobody came’
- (12) *Eu num encaro nem ninguém*
 I NEG stare.PRS NEG nobody
 ‘I don’t even stare at anyone’
- (13) *Ninguém nem num veio*
 nobody NEG NEG come.PST.PRF
 ‘Nobody came’
- (14) *As vezes nem ela num conhece Getúlio*
 the.PL time.PL NEG she NEG know.PRES Getúlio
 ‘Maybe she doesn’t even know Getúlio’
- (15) *Tinha ano que ele nem num vinha*
 have.PST.IPFV year that he NEG NEG come.PST.IPFV
 ‘There were years that he didn’t even come’

In (9), the indefinite quantifier *ninguém* appears after the verb without any preverbal negator, which follows the pattern observed by Schwenter for colloquial BP varieties. In (10) and (11), a negative marker in preverbal position follows the indefinite quantifier *ninguém*. In (11), there is another negative marker after the verb (discontinuous negation). In both sentences (10) and (11), the negative marker immediately follows the negative indefinite pronoun and precedes the verb.

In Examples (12)–(15) *nem* co-occurs with *num* and/or *ninguém*. In (12), we find discontinuous negation with three negative words: the negative marker *num* and the negative word *nem* before the verb, and the negative indefinite pronoun *ninguém* after the verb. Interestingly, *nem* appears immediately before *ninguém*, which is not mentioned in any of the descriptions of the distribution of negative elements in BP. In (13), the three negative words *ninguém*, *nem* and *num* all appear in preverbal position and in sequence. In (14) and (15), *nem* and *num*, two negative words, appear preverbally again, not following the negative concord pattern described for BP. In (14), the subject pronoun *ela* ‘she’ is found between the two negative words. In (15), the negators occur sequentially.

Although negative words co-occur in BP varieties, in general they do not follow the distributions presented from (10) to (15). Multiple negative words occurring only in preverbal position, as in sentences (10), (13), (14) and (15), as well as multiple negative words in a row in the same sentence, as in Examples (10), (11), (12), (13), and (15), are not typical features attested in BP varieties, nor in Romance languages in general. In fact, they do not follow the patterns of negative concord agreements for Portuguese described in the literature.

5. The semantics of *nunca* in Kalunga Portuguese

According to descriptive works and some analytical studies on negation, negative indefinites like *nunca* ‘never’, *ninguém* ‘nobody’, *nenhum(a)* ‘none’ and *nada* ‘nothing’ do not function like the sentential negative marker *não/num* ‘not’ (Perini 2005: 86; Cavalcante 2009: 252; Castilho 2016: 323). Besides the negative function, the negative indefinites usually have syntactic and/or semantic/pragmatic functions. However, in Kalunga Portuguese, *nunca* may function by itself as a sentential negator, and the context makes clear whether *nunca* is used as a temporal adverb or as a sentential negative marker. Sentence (16), for instance, has two possible readings if it is taken out of context.

- (16) *Ela nunca veio?*
 she NEG come.PST.PRF⁷
 ‘She never came? / She didn’t come?’

⁷ I do not gloss singular and plural in the verb, because the plural system in Kalunga is different from standard BP varieties, and the plurality of the subject is not always indicated in the verbal morphology (for more on the morphology of the verbal system in Kalunga, see Mattos 2016).

This sentence has two possible interpretations. One interpretation (hereafter Sense 1) refers to a situation in which *ela* ‘she’ (the person the conversation is about) had never been in a certain place at any time before (the place where the people involved in the conversation are). The other possible interpretation (hereafter Sense 2) is that *ela* ‘she’ did not come to that certain place at that certain moment, but it does not imply a reference to ‘at no time before’. What distinguishes the two meanings is a temporal relationship of the *moment of conversation* (hereafter MOC) to a referential timeframe. In the two cases, the speakers assume a period in relation to the MOC. In Sense 1, this period refers to all earlier stages or preceding phases, i.e. multiple occasions in a previous time. In Sense 2, it is a punctual referential time, i.e. it refers to that single occasion.

In both interpretations, there is an assumed proposition that ‘she came’, and the negative sentences reverse the truth of the proposition. In Sense 1, the presupposition is that she did not come on any occasion in the past. In Sense 2, the presupposition is that she did not come on that occasion and there are no references to occasions in the past: the sentence is merely negated without adding any temporal quantifier meaning. The representations in Figures 3 and 4 are designed to capture this semantic distinction by using logical concepts.

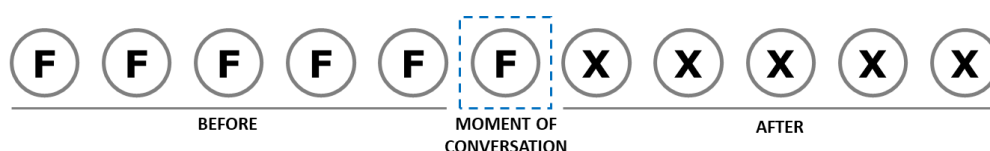


Figure 3: The semantics of *nunca* (Sense 1)

F (false) indicates denial of the proposition; in this case, the proposition ‘she came’ is false. T (true) is for validating the proposition ‘she came’, whereas X (irrelevant) is used when it is not relevant if the proposition is true or false, i.e. it does not matter whether ‘she came’ or whether ‘she did not come’. The scale indicates instances of time in relation to the moment the conversation takes place. The blue dotted square refers to one instance of time when the conversation takes place, the MOC. Each circle to the left of the square indicates a (discrete) instance of time in the past, and each circle to the right of the square indicates a (discrete) instance of time in the future. All the examples with *nunca* in my sample have verbs with a past time marker, with both imperfective and perfective aspectual meanings.

Therefore, in Figure 3, which represents Sense 1 in this paper, the proposition ‘she came’ is false for the occasion of the MOC and for any occasion in the past.

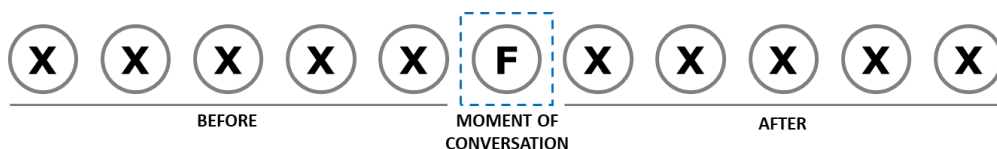


Figure 4: The semantics of *nunca* (Sense 2)

For Sense 2, represented in Figure 4, the proposition ‘she came’ is false for the instance of time referred to in the MOC. It is, however, irrelevant if she had been there at any time in the past or not, i.e. it can be either true or false that she came there before. Therefore, it is F (false) for that punctual moment the conversation takes place and X (irrelevant) for any other instance in the past or in the future. *Nunca*, in this case, reverses the truth of the proposition and does not add any semantic reference to instances in the past.

In Sense 1, *never* functions as a negative temporal adverb, a temporal quantifier, while in Sense 2, it functions merely as a sentential negative marker. The tense and aspect of the verb do not seem to play a role in the semantics of *nunca* in this respect. In my sample, *nunca* appears in preverbal positions. It can appear at the beginning of the sentence.

The context in which the Kalunga speaker (Miriam) used sentence (16) was that Miriam asked me if Maria came to talk to me at Maria’s house, because when Miriam approached me, she saw that Maria was not with me, and both of us had expected her to be there. Clearly, Maria had been in her own house before, so *nunca* cannot mean ‘at no point in time before’. From the context, we can affirm that *nunca* in sentence (16) functions as a sentential negator (Sense 2).

Examples (17) to (20) show the use of *nunca* as a temporal quantifier (Sense 1). The model in Figure 3 represents the semantics of *nunca* in these examples.

- (17) *Eu nunca tinha ido [hospital]*
 I NEG have.PST.IPFV go.PTCP [hospital]
 ‘I had **never** been in a hospital’

- (18) *Olha a luz mas nunca ligou não*
 look the light but NEG turn on.PST.PRF NEG
 ‘Look at the power pole, but they have never switched the light on’
- (19) *Nunca tive medo não*
 NEG have.PST.PRF afraid NEG
 ‘I had **never** been afraid’
- (20) *Nunca deu prejuízo ninguém não*
 NEG give.PST.PRF loss nobody NEG
 ‘It [the fire] has never caused loss to anyone’

In (17), the speaker is talking about the first time she stayed in a hospital. She says that she is healthy but that she was ill recently and had to go to a hospital for the first time in her life. The use of *nunca* in sentence (17) has the temporal quantifier meaning that refers to ‘at no point in time before’, she had not been in a hospital, not once, in the various stages of her life, until the moment she went for the first time. In (18), the speaker is showing the power poles that had been installed in some areas of the community and complaining about the fact that the lights had never ever been switched on. In (19), the speaker is talking about how to be a midwife and how challenging it can be. When asked if she sometimes felt scared or afraid of a difficult delivery, she replied with (19). Sentence (19) refers to the period of her life in which she acted as a midwife, revealing that she had never felt afraid on any of the multiple occasions she had acted as a midwife (she reported that she had supported 200 childbirths). In (20), the speaker was talking about some difficulties the community had faced during rainy seasons. He said that in some rainy seasons the water level in the river is too high and that the water moves fast and carries crops and animals away. When asked if they have ever experienced problems with fire in the dry season, he replied with (20). The sentence in (20) refers to many dry seasons, i.e. many occasions in the past when fire was not a problem for that community.

In (17) through (20), *nunca* functions as a negative temporal quantifier with Sense 1 represented above in Figure 3. *Nunca* denies the propositions presented in these four sentences, viz., *Eu tinha ido* ‘I had been (in a hospital)’; *(Alguém) ligou a luz* ‘(Someone) switched the light on’; *Eu tive medo* ‘I had been afraid’; *Deu prejuízo a alguém* ‘It (the fire) caused loss to someone’. Moreover, *nunca* indicates that these propositions occurred at no instance of time in the past, referring to multiple separate occasions. In (18) and (19), there

are two negative words: *nunca* and *não*. In (19), *nunca* is at the beginning of the sentence, while in (18), it is at the beginning of a clause, but in both cases, *nunca* is in preverbal position. *Não* is always in sentence-final position when it concords with a negative indefinite pronoun. In (20), there are three negative words: *nunca* at the beginning and *ninguém* and *não* in final position. The co-occurrence of two negative markers in (18) and (19) and three in (20) exemplifies the negative concord system in Kalunga in that, in these examples with *nunca*, Kalunga follows similar patterns with the negative concord system as those found in other BP varieties. The multiple markers do not change the sentence polarity. In case of multiple negative markers, in my sample, *nunca* always occurs in preverbal position, and the other(s) negative marker(s) in sentence-final position.

Examples (21) and (22) show the use of *nunca mais*:

(21) *Nunca fui mais [pra escola]*
 NEG go.PST.PRF more [to school]
 ‘I no longer went to school’/ ‘I never went to school again’

(22) *Nunca vi mais ela*
 NEG see.PST.PRF more her
 ‘I never more saw her’/ ‘I never saw her again’

In (21), the speaker is explaining that he went to school when he already had his own children, after he was married, and that, after this period, he did not come back to school. In (22), the speaker is talking about her mother, that she was very young when she saw her for the last time. In both sentences (21) and (22), *nunca* functions as a temporal quantifier, joining *mais* to make two presuppositions. (21) presupposes that (i) he went to school for a certain period, and after that period until the moment the conversation takes place; and (ii) he did not come back to school again. In (22), it is assumed that (i) she saw her mother for a certain period of time (when she was very small), and after this period until the moment she speaks (ii), she did not see her mother again. The semantics of *nunca mais* could be represented by Figure 5.

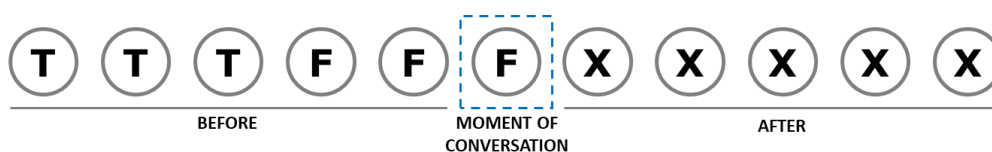


Figure 5: The semantics of *nunca mais*

As shown in Figure 5, in (21) the proposition ‘he went to school’ was true at one point in time, but that at a later point it became false, i.e. ‘he did not go to school’ anymore. In (22), the proposition ‘she saw her mother’ was true for some time, and at some point, it became a false statement, i.e. ‘she did not see her mother anymore’. In each case, the period of time during which the event did not happen (‘he did not come back to school’ or ‘she did not see her mother’) refers to multiple instances, not to a single one. In both sentences (21) and (22), *nunca* functions as a temporal quantifier.

Nonetheless, in Kalunga, *nunca* does not always have temporal quantifier implications. Examples (23) to (28) show *nunca* functioning as a sentential negative marker that simply reverses the truth of a proposition.

- (23) – *Você viu Joselino?*
 you see.PST.PRF Joselino
 ‘Did you see Joselino?’
 – *Eu nunca vi Joselino*
 I NEG see.PST.PRF Joselino
 ‘I didn’t see Joselino’
- (24) *Nós nunca marcou hora*
 we NEG set.PST.PRF time
 ‘We didn’t set a time’
- (25) *Mãe mas iaiá tá queimando de febre e nem água nunca bebeu quanto mais pra comer*
 mother but grandma be.PRS burn.GER of fever and nor
 water NEG drink.PST.PRF even more to eat.INF
 ‘Mom, but grandma is burning up with fever and water she didn’t drink, she did not even eat anything’
- (26) *Peguei Luana mais pequena [pra criar], nunca tava caminhando não*
 get.PST.PRF Luana more small [to raise], NEG be.PST.IPFV
 walk.GER NEG
 ‘I got Luana very young to raise her, she was not walking yet’

(27) *Os trem da senhora, a senhora nunca arrumou?*
 the.PL.M things of madam, the madam NEG pack.PST.PRF
 ‘Your things, did you not pack them?’

(28) *Eu só porque nunca batizei né?*
 I only because NEG baptize.PST.PRF PRT
 ‘Just that I was not baptised, right?’

In (23) the mother asks her daughter if she had seen her brother, Joselino. Clearly, her daughter had seen her brother before in her life because they lived together, so *nunca* does not carry any semantics of quantification over time, it just denies the proposition ‘I saw Joselino’, functioning as a sentential negator. In (24), the speaker is saying that there is an appointment at someone’s house, but he does not know what time it will be because they did not set a time for the appointment. The speaker in (24) is certainly referring to the occasion of the appointment, i.e. one single occasion, and *nunca* is the negative marker in the sentence that denies the proposition ‘we set a time’. In (25), the speaker is talking about a period when she was seriously ill and she is reproducing the speech of her grandchild, who went to visit her and came back home saying to his mother that his grandmother was very ill and that she did not drink any water or even eat anything. Obviously, *nunca* is denying the proposition ‘grandmother drank water’, referring only to that punctual occasion of a brief period. So, also in (25), *nunca* is only a sentential negator. In (26), the grandmother is saying that she took her grandchild, Luana, to raise her when she was still very young, so young that she could not walk yet. *Nunca* functions as a sentential negator that denies the proposition ‘she was walking’. The woman in (27) and I were talking about the fact that I was leaving the community that afternoon. She asked me if I had not packed my things. Clearly, I had packed my things before, for instance when I went to the community originally, so *nunca* in (27) is a sentential negator that denies the proposition ‘you have packed your things now’. In (28), the speaker is telling me that she has friends from the Protestant church, and that she had been in the church before but had not been baptised there. When asked if she had also not been baptised in the Catholic church, she replied emphatically that, obviously, she had been baptised in the Catholic church. Therefore, *nunca* in (28) does not carry the semantics of ‘at no point in time before’, but is a sentential negator that denies the proposition ‘I was baptised (in the Protestant church)’.

In all the sentences presented in (23) to (28), the semantics of *nunca* can be represented by the model in Figure 4, in which the negation of the proposition is punctual and refers to one single occasion and does not refer to other instances before or after the MOC. Therefore, *nunca* in these sentences functions merely as a negative sentential marker, without the temporal quantifier meaning, i.e. Sense 2 in this paper.

The Examples (29) to (31) are sentences in which *nunca* functions only as sentential negator (Sense 2), and it co-occurs with another negative marker as *não* ‘no’ in (29a) and *nem* ‘nor’ in (31), or is followed by the particle *que* ‘that’ in (29b) and (30).

(29) – *Você já jantou?*
 you already had dinner
 ‘Did you already have dinner?’

a) – *Eu nunca jantei não*
 I NEG had dinner NEG
 ‘I did not have dinner’

b) – *Eu nunca que jantei*
 I NEG PRT had dinner
 ‘I did not have dinner’

(30) *Nunca que ouvi [o barulho da moto]*
 NEG PRT listen.PST.PRF [the noise from the motorcycle]
 ‘I didn’t hear the motorcycle’s noise’

(31) *Eu nunca nem vi ele [ontem]*
 I NEG nor see.PST.PRF him [yesterday]
 ‘I didn’t see him yesterday’

In (29), the person arrives at a house in the village and the host offers dinner (this is common practice in Kalunga), asking if the person had already had dinner. Both answers (29a) and (29b) occur in my data as responses to the same question. In (30), someone asks if the person knows if a man called Carlos has arrived at home. The person answers that she does not think Carlos has arrived, because she had not heard the noise that Carlos’ motorcycle produces. In (31), Carlos asks whether Maria saw her neighbour, Roberto, yesterday, and Maria answers the question negatively. In (29) to (31), *nunca* is clearly denying the

propositions ‘I had dinner’, ‘I heard the motorcycle’s noise’ and ‘I saw him’, without referring to other instances in the past, i.e. *nunca* is used in Sense 2.

The use of *não* in (29a), *que* in (29b) and (30), and *nem* in (31) in co-occurrence with *nunca* as a sentential negator follows the same syntactic patterns (e.g. the position in the sentence) when they co-occur with *nunca* functioning as a temporal adverb.

In contrast to other aspects of negation presented in the previous section, the use of *nunca* as a sentential negative marker without the quantifier meaning has to my knowledge not been reported for other varieties of Portuguese in the literature. However, in Mattos and Oliveira (2020), specialists in varieties of Goiás and Minas Gerais filled in a questionnaire for a survey of morphosyntactic features of the Portuguese-speaking world varieties, and some respondents have reported the presence of this feature in their data, which indicates that it occurs in other vernacular BP varieties as well.

Although *nunca* is not attested as a common sentential negator in varieties of Portuguese, historical and modern, it is found in Portuguese-based creoles. In Casamance creole, Cape Verdean creole and Guinea-Bissau creoles, all with Portuguese as a lexifier, the sentential negator is *ka*, which originates from Portuguese *nunca*. Also in Asia, in Portuguese lexifier Papia Kristang of Malaysia, *ngka*, likewise from Portuguese *nunca*, is used in both the present and the past (for further data on Portuguese lexifier creoles, see Michaelis *et al.* 2013). The equivalent of *nunca* is also a sentential negator in other languages outside the Portuguese-speaking world, for instance in Berbice⁸ (Dutch-based) creole *noiti*, in Belizean (English-based) creole *neva*, especially in the Caribbean English-based creoles, and in vernacular varieties of English ‘never’ (Schneider 2000; Lucas and Willis 2012; Kortmann and Lunkenheimer 2013).

6. Remnants or innovations in Kalunga?

In Sections 3 and 4, I presented aspects of the negation system in Kalunga. In this section, I investigate three of these aspects from a diachronic perspective, using documentation in historical texts as evidence. This enables us to trace the development of these linguistic features in order to explain, to the extent that this is possible, the resulting system in Kalunga. First, I verify old texts in order to check whether the present-day features attested in Kalunga may be remnants

⁸ I would like to thank Peter Bakker for the data input for Berbice, Casamance and Papia Kristang.

from earlier stages of Portuguese that are not (or no longer) attested in varieties of BP. Second, if the features are not remnants from Old Portuguese, I verify the possibilities that may give rise to these new developments, i.e. innovations, in Kalunga. The three aspects under analysis in this section are:

- i. the use of discontinuous (NEG2) and post-verbal negation (NEG3), discussed in Section 3.1;
- ii. the distribution of the negative words *ninguém* and *nem* and other negation markers, discussed in Section 3.2;
- iii. the use of *nunca* as a sentential negator (Sense 2 in this paper), discussed in Section 4.

Since there are many studies about feature (i), including diachronic studies, I base my investigation and explanation on the existing literature on the topic. To investigate features (ii) and (iii), I consult the *Corpus Histórico do Português Tycho Brahe* (CTB, Galves *et al.* 2017), which is an electronic corpus of historical Portuguese containing texts written between the 14th and 20th centuries. There are 76 texts, consisting of 3,302,666 words in total. This approach is relevant, since there is not sufficient information on these two specific linguistic features in the literature.

6.1. NEG2 and NEG3

NEG2 and NEG3 types have been discussed in different diachronic studies with regard to Afro varieties and BP varieties in general. Some scholars like Sessarego (2017) claim that these negation strategies are remnant features from Old Portuguese and Spanish that have managed to survive in highly isolated areas. Schwegler (2018) contests Sessarego's claims and argues that the post-verbal (NEG3) construction has never been documented for Iberian Spanish and Portuguese. Schwegler links the use of the three negation strategies to substrate influence that evolved under contact conditions during colonial periods, as NEG2 and NEG3 are attested "exclusively in Spanish- and/or Portuguese-speaking areas where the transatlantic slave trade once played a significant role" (Schwegler 2018: 25).

Furtado da Cunha (2007) takes the position that the use of these three negation strategies is a change in progress in BP and does not link the three types of negation to features of Old Portuguese or substrate influence. She claims: "these three forms originated at different times in the past. Being inherited from Latin, the preverbal negative (NEG1) is the only one attested in written texts from the 13th to the 15th century, to the period of Old Portuguese.

The embracing negation (NEG2), on the other hand, can only be found in written texts from the second half of the 16th century, specifically in Gil Vicente’s plays” (Furtado da Cunha 2007: 1640).

The NEG3 strategy appears more recently. This is in line with the findings of Seixas (2013), who argues for the change in progress of these three strategies and considers the possibility of the use of NEG2 strategy in the context of the denial of presupposition in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The available studies point to three different directions concerning the development of embracing and post-verbal negation features in Kalunga and other BP varieties: remnant features (as defended by Sessarego 2017), substrate influence (as defended by Schwegler 2018), and spontaneous language change (as defended by Furtado da Cunha 2007; Seixas 2013). We do not have a definite answer as to whether these types of negation are innovations or remnants, but according to the evidence presented so far, retention does not seem to explain the use of NEG2 and NEG3 in Kalunga and in BP varieties in general. The fact that NEG3 is frequently used by old people in Kalunga (Mattos 2016) and in Afro communities in Bahia (Cavalcante 2009), and the fact that it is more common in these more isolated communities of descendants of Africans than in other areas, suggests that this is not an ordinary process of change. Usually, the process is started by young people in the mainstream area and spreads afterwards when these young people become adults and transmit the change to their children. Multiple negatives represent a common development in languages, and the co-occurrence of the three negative strategies in Iberian contact varieties, especially in the Atlantic area, as claimed by Schwegler, might be a phenomenon which is triggered by a linguistic contact situation, but not necessarily influenced by specific substrate input.

6.2. Distribution of multiple negative markers

In the CTB, there are 578 *ninguém* tokens. There are only three occurrences where *ninguém* was combined with another negative element. Examples (32), (33) and (34) show *ninguém* with another sentential negator in preverbal position. In (33) and (34), the negative marker *não* immediately follows the negative indefinite pronoun *ninguém*.

- (32) *Se nam lhe ninguém chegou afora ele*
 if NEG her nobody arrive.PST besides him
 ‘That nobody has approached her [the virgin young lady], besides him’
 (Galves *et al.* 2017)⁹

⁹ Text by Antônio Ferreira. The exact reference of this text in the corpus is (F_002).

- (33) ... *tanta fantasia que ninguém não se contenta*
much fantasy that nobody NEG itself satisfy
'... so much fantasy that nobody is satisfied'
(Galves *et al.* 2017)¹⁰
- (34) *Vós quereis que tenha modos que pareça bem*
You want.2PL that have.SBJV behaviour that seem.SBJV well
a todos e ninguém não me deseje?
to everybody and nobody NEG me desire.SBJV?
'You want that I behave well to look nice to everybody and nobody
desires me?'
(Galves *et al.* 2017)

All these examples appear to be from plays. It is of course essential to know what kind of characters utter these phrases, as they may be characteristic of certain social and/or ethnic groupings. Example (32) is from a text by Antônio Ferreira, who was born in 1528; and Examples (33) and (34) are from texts by Gil Vicente, who was born in 1465. In Example (32), the character is Pilarte, a servant; and in Examples (33) and (34), the characters are, respectively, Domicília, a nun, and Isabel, a single lady. Gil Vicente is known for using in his plays morphological and syntactic features, which can be interpreted as an approximation of the speech of blacks and gypsies, for instance (Naro 1978). This is not the case in these examples, since the use of *ninguém* combined with another negative element occurs in the speech of characters representing various levels of social status depending on their occupations. This means that these examples were not uttered by characters of African descent in the theatre, and the features in this case are not used to characterise the speech of African descendants.

There are 2,653 *nem* tokens in CTB. I found some occurrences of *nem* with another sentential negator in preverbal position, as shown in sentences (35) and (36), the majority of the occurrences being in Gil Vicente's texts. I did not find any instance of *nem* immediately followed by a negative marker.

¹⁰ Examples (33), (34) and (36) are from the texts by Gil Vicente. The exact reference of the texts in the corpus is (V_005).

(35) *Nem vós não ganhareis com essa cache.*
 NEG you NEG win.FUT.2PL with this trick
 ‘Not even you will win with this trick.’
 (Galves *et al.* 2017)¹¹

(36) *Nem eu não quero Gonçalo.*
 NEG I NEG want.1SG Gonçalo
 ‘Not even I want Gonçalo.’
 (Galves *et al.* 2017)

Both Examples (35) and (36) are used in plays. The first one written by Nuno Nisceno Sutil, born in 1675, and the second one by Gil Vicente. In (35) the character is Caterine, a shepherdess, and in (36), the character is Paschoal, a miller. Neither of them seems to be of African descent.

These findings are in line with diachronic studies on negation containing examples of sentences allowing the combination of two negative words – like the pairs *ninguém* and *não*, *nenhum* and *não*, *nem* and *não* – in preverbal position, in Old Portuguese (Namiuti and Miotto 2014; Poláček 2010, and references therein). Based on the evidence that has been presented, I argue that this phenomenon in Kalunga may be a retention of structures in Old Portuguese combined with some innovations such as the use of three negative words in sequence in the same sentence. Nonetheless, the fact that these features are rare in the historical data and only appear in specific plays suggests that the phenomenon was present in non-standard vernacular varieties.

6.3. *Nunca* as a sentential negator

In the CTB, 1,049 *nunca* tokens occur, always functioning as a negative temporal quantifier (Sense 1). This finding speaks against the possibility that the way it functions in Kalunga, as a sentential negator, is a remnant feature from Old Portuguese. This is in line with the work of Namiuti and Miotto (2014) on clitics and negation in Old Portuguese. These authors have shown the differences between *não* (sentential negator) and *nunca* (negative temporal quantifier), with both particles having separate functions through time. According to these authors, evidence from historical Portuguese shows that *não*

¹¹ Example (35) is from the text by Nuno Nisceno. The exact reference of the text in the corpus is (S_005).

and negative adverbs like *nunca* and *jamais* behave very differently in terms of sentence structure and syntax (Namiuti and Miotto 2014: 107).

Therefore, the use of *nunca* as a sentential negator in Kalunga, as well as in many contact varieties, suggests that this is a common grammaticalisation process. In this process, an emphasiser negative marker with a quantifier function loses its emphatic and quantification functions and becomes a sentential negator. This innovation process may be motivated or shaped by the contact situation, in which speakers tend to reanalyse emphatic structures into ordinary structures. The grammaticalisation of *nunca* as a sentential negator is usually restricted to past-tense contexts, as in my Kalunga sample.

Both young and old people use *nunca* in my data, as a sentential negator and as a negative temporal quantifier. A variationist study would help the analysis to verify whether any progress is being made and to determine the direction of any such progress. In the questionnaire used by Mattos and Oliveira (2020), the use of *nunca* as a sentential negator is also reported for vernaculars in the neighbouring states of Goiás and Minas Gerais in Brazil, Libolo Portuguese in Angola, Capeverdean Portuguese, and the Kabuberdianu creole, the varieties of both Sotavento and Barlavento islands.

7. Concluding remarks

In this paper, I have presented and analysed the negation system in Kalunga Portuguese, focusing on three aspects of negation in this language:

- i) the use of three sentential strategies (NEG1, NEG2 and NEG3),
- ii) the use of *ninguém* and *nem* combined with one another and with other negative markers, and
- iii) the use of *nunca* as a sentential negative marker in contrast with its use as a negative temporal quantifier.

The use of the three types of negation in Kalunga usually follows general patterns of BP varieties. However, the distribution of *ninguém*, *nem* and other negative markers in Kalunga differs from the systems described for other BP varieties. The use of *nunca* as a sentential negator attested in Kalunga has been reported for some contact varieties, especially creole languages, but rarely for other BP varieties. The diachronic investigation shows that when some of these linguistic features appear in Old Portuguese, they appear in special texts (plays), as examples of colloquial speech.

This study contributes to the understanding of the resulting linguistic systems in more isolated communities as well as to the interpretation of how individual linguistic features develop in contact varieties. In addition, it brings new insights to the literature on negation in Portuguese varieties and in contact linguistics in general.

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