

Reinterpreting Dialectological Void in North of Brazil

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Abstract:

In the present article, we intend to present reflections on questions that are not easily answered when applying the Phonetic-Phonological Questionnaire (QFF) and the Semantic-Lexical Questionnaire (QSL). These questionnaires integrate the methodology of the Brazilian Linguistic Atlas Project (ALiB), a dialectological orientation project that aims to describe and map the variation and linguistic diversity of Brazilian Portuguese. We will focus specifically on the selection and analysis of questions used to collect data whose use presents difficulty when collecting. We limit ourselves to the presentation, reflection and discussion of questions 32 and 41 of the questionnaire applied by the ALiB. Question 32 integrates the QFF and aims to obtain the 'abóbora' (pumpkin) form. Question 41 is already part of the QSL and has as one of the expected variants 'camomila' (chamomile). The main hypothesis in the explanation of the facts is that there is pressure from social factors, not only from the classical factors, but also from the social evaluation of linguistic forms, as well as the historical-cultural factor, an integral part of the linguistic-cultural reality of any community investigated.

Keywords:

Dialectology. Dialectical void. Cartographic representation.

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INTRODUCTION

Empirical research necessarily involves working with data. When adopting a model of this nature, differently from what mentalist models preached, the data obtained have primacy and theorizing is done *a posteriori* based on the evidence provided by the data. From this perspective, the data can present linguistic evidences that can only be obtained when considering the language in use. However, it is important to highlight that, in order for the researcher to have a good *corpus* for analysis, the data collection must be planned. Among others, it is necessary to consider instruments and criteria that are in line with what is intended to be investigated. This is not an easy task. Therefore, the instruments of data collection assume a special *status* in the research that adopt this model.

In Brazil, the number of researches that use empirical data for linguistic research is high. The progress of the work on linguistic variation, with emphasis on Sociolinguistics and Dialectology, are linked to this productivity. There are several research instruments adopted by sociolinguists and dialectologists. Dialectology has focused more on the use of questionnaires. In Brazil, they have been customarily used for the construction of linguistic atlases. We highlight, in this context, the Linguistic Atlas of Brazil Project (ALiB), whose data collection is also done through questionnaires, but not only through them. It is about the difficulties of data collection when applying some questions of the Phonetic-Phonological Questionnaire (QFF) and the Semantic-Lexical Questionnaire (QSL) used by the ALiB that we will focus on in our analysis. We intend to point out, discuss some causes of “no response”, analyze the reformulations applied to the original questions to obtain the answers and the impacts that result from these reformulations. The choice of ALiB is based on the fact that the questionnaires used by the project have the arduous task of accounting for the linguistic and cultural diversity of the country. We also say cultural because if a given question is not in line with the knowledge, the culture of a certain region, for example, the question may not be answered or be answered with difficulty, sometimes having to recourse to reformulations. This brings impacts to the results to be mapped and the need for some useful details to understand the results, as we will see later.

As an instrument for the collection of linguistic and social information in the field of Brazilian Dialectology, the ALiB questionnaires can show regional linguistic differences, starting with issues of anthropological and linguistic toponymy properly. However, there are formulations of issues not conducive to current uses that can effectively represent regional (or regionalisms) particularities, which is natural given the extension of this project.

In 2007, when we were collecting data for ALiB as an auxiliary researcher, we experienced a situation that led us to reflect on how the knowledge of local culture is important for the elaboration of questions that integrate a questionnaire and for its re-elaboration, when these questions are not easily answered, either because they present some difficulty in their formulation or because their content does not integrate the knowledge of the speakers that are interviewed. It's about matters of this nature that we're going to stick with.

Going back to the experience, we remember that the situation referred to question 32 of the QFF: ... *what grows on the ground, big (mimicry), with a thick red-yellowish bark inside and we cook to eat, make sweet?* (ALiB NATIONAL PROJECT COMMITTEE, 2001, p. 9). The expected response, 'abóbora' (pumpkin), was not answered by the respondent. We would watch and see that it would not be easily answered because there was information in the question that was not part of the local culture or lacking some information in the matter that could activate in memory what was being described, something more specific of the food culture of the North of the country. Even though we had already used the questionnaire, we had not yet realized it. We asked the interviewer to pause and include in the question the following information: ... *you usually put it in the stew here*. The answer was immediate. This fact, among other motivations, stimulated us to invest in the present research, based on data from the capitals of the North of Brazil.

Our analysis will focus on the questions asked, the reformulations of these questions, the answers presented to the formulation and reformulation of the questions and the types of answers presented. We will also present considerations on some aspects that were ignored in the questions, or even in their reformulation, raising questions regarding the impacts that this has on the presentation of the results and the presentation of the letters. Finally, we will reiterate and / or present some reflections, suggestions that may contribute to the answers being obtained in a less laborious way, both for the interviewer and for the interviewee.

METHODOLOGY

The analysis of the data of the present study was based on the questions asked by the interviewers and the answers presented by the speakers from six capitals of the North Region. They were chosen based on the experiences accumulated in field research and data handling for the study of phonetic variation and lexical diversity in this region. As already mentioned, the *corpus* was composed by the questions and answers related to questions 32 and 41 of the questionnaires applied by the Brazilian Linguistic Atlas Project (ALiB). Question 32 integrates QFF and question 41 is part of QSL. This has an important implication and demands the presentation of our understanding of the expected response, a term commonly used among dialectologists.

The answers provided in the QFF should be exactly those that appear as an expected answer in the questionnaire, since they will be the target of phonetic-phonological analysis.

In them are the phonetic-phonological context and the variable to be analyzed. In this case, the term response expected is well applied. The questions that integrate the QSL can present several possibilities of answer, since one wants to identify, to describe, to map the lexical diversity in Brazil. So, a high number of variants, of answers is very welcome. The questionnaire points to one of the possibilities of occurrence, as is the case of ‘camomila’ (chamomile) for question 41 of the QSL. These are different objectives and, therefore, different procedures for data collection.

We can say that the interaction between those involved in the interviews was also the object of our analysis, as well as the answers that resulted from the question as intended in the questionnaire or its reformulation.

The interviews took into account six capitals of the North Region, namely: Belém, Boa Vista, Macapá, Manaus, Porto Velho and Rio Branco¹. The data analyzed correspond to 48 interviewees in total; being eight employees per capital, stratified according to age (18 to 30 years of age and 50 to 65 years of age), sex (female and male) and schooling (literacy up to the 4th grade of Elementary School and with a Higher Education course).

Firstly, all the interviews carried out in the mentioned capitals were graphetically transcribed. Then, we select and listen to the interviews to evaluate aspects related to the answers of the questions under study. We wanted to know if there was difficulty in obtaining the answers; for this, we had to identify how the answers were obtained, by means of reformulation or not. We also evaluated the nature of the reformulations, the type of response obtained and the insertions responsible for the (no) success of the reformulations. Thus, we characterize the questions and answers as:

- a) Question without reformulation;
- b) Question with reformulation;
- c) Nature of the reformulation;
- d) No response²;
- e) Non-response³.

In addition, we evaluate quantitative aspects; we relate question types to response types. Once these evaluations were done, we focused on the interlocutions between the interviewee and the interviewer, in order to indicate which aspects contributed to the question being answered or not, or for the answer to be considered valid. The information collected was analyzed from a social, historical and cultural point of view. In some cases, we use dictionaries for consultation regarding definitions and etymology of occurrences.

Let us proceed to the presentation and discussion of the results.

¹ There is no data collected for Palmas.

² When the informant does not respond or says he/she does not know.

³ An answer that does not correspond to the concept presented in the question. This is not always easy to define. In some cases, certain concepts correspond to distinct referents in different geographical spaces.

“FATALITIES OF THE REGIONAL IMPOSITION”⁴

We will begin our analysis by question 32 of the QFF. In this questionnaire, the questions are asked with the objective of obtaining words already predicted for specific analysis of phonetic-phonological phenomena. The purpose of this question is to get the item ‘abóbora’ (pumpkin). The purpose is to evaluate the linguistic variation in proparoxytones, more specifically in the non-final postonics of the term. Thus, it is imperative that the respondent’s response is the lexical form indicated in the questionnaire.

What’s in the stew? (O que vai no cozidão?)

Question 32 of the QFF has the expected response to the item ‘abóbora’ (pumpkin) and has the following wording: “... that which grows on the ground, big (mimicry), with a thick red-yellowish bark inside and we cook to eat, make sweet? “(NATIONAL ALiB PROJECT COMMITTEE, 2001, p. 9). The difficulty to obtain ‘abóbora’ led to a high number of questions with reformulations in the corpus, with a significant difference of frequency between the two types of questions. There are 29 questions with a reformulation (60.42%), against 16 questions without reformulation (33.33%), whose information from the original question of the ALiB questionnaire was protected by the inquirer. This result points to at least two difficulties: the first concerns the acquisition of the variant that corresponds to the concept presented in the question, which we will discuss later. The second refers to obtaining the ‘abóbora’ form, since, in the north of the country, the fruit is also called jerimum.

Because it is a well-known fruit in Brazil, easily found for acquisition and with potential for complete use in cooking, the changes in the questions were restricted to the insertion of information with cultural particularities related to the functionality (‘it’s used for ...’), activated in memory by the expressions ‘stew’ or ‘put in cooked meat’. Evidence of the influence of these expressions to obtain the expected response and its variants can be confirmed when we resort to the number of unanswered questions (three single occurrences); the absence of the information mentioned in the questions with alterations implied the total absence of occurrences (either the expected response or its variants). The following passage, obtained in an interview in Rio Branco (Woman, 2nd age group, Higher Education), exemplifies this:

Fragment 1

INQ.- What grows on the ground, big (mimicry), with a thick red-yellowish bark inside and we cook to eat, make sweet, we can also eat it with salad? (E aquilo que dá no chão assim

⁴ The title of this section resumes the text of Rossi (1967) on "Dialectology". It seemed very appropriate and applicable to the present study. We recommend reading.

que é gran::de com co... com a casca gro::ssa meio vermelho amarelada por de::ntro, que faz do::ce, dá pacomê também na sala::da?)

INF.- *Dá no chãõ?*

INQ.- *Yes. There are ones that are round like this, have a few buds or they are ... (É. Tem uns que são redon::dos assim, tem uns go::mos ou que são...)*

INF.- *Ab me... éh::*

INQ.- *You can make tasty sweet treat like... I don't know if you make sweet here or put it in the fish stew. (Dá pafazê um doce gosto::so igual... eu num sei se vocês fazem doce aqui disso ou põe na caldera::da).*

INF.- *Eu nu... nã perai (laughter)*

INQ.- *No, but there's no problem. I'll get back to it later. (Não, mas nu tem problema. Depois eu retomo).*

The relevance of the knowledge of regional particularities in the QFF application was also revealed in the inappropriate attempt to extend the functionality of the 'abóbora' item to another type of food, highlighted in Fragment 1. Perhaps because it is a well known dish in the Northern Region, fish cooked with vegetables, the inquirer alluded to it. But in the region, it is not customary to add pumpkin in this delicacy. Therefore, we understand that the presence of the item 'calderada' in the question has made it impossible to obtain a response. Differently from the following example, obtained in an interview in Porto Velho (Woman, 1st age group, Higher Education), in which the items 'cozido' (cooked) and 'cozidão' (stew), which reach the reference 'carne cozida com legumes' (meat cooked with vegetables), favor an immediate response, the expected response and its lexical variant.

Fragment 2

INQ.- *What is it called that thing that grows on the ground, big (mimicry), with a thick red-yellowish bark inside... (Como é que chama aquilo que dá no chã::o, gran::de, uma casca gro::ssa meio vermelho alaranjada por den::tro...)*

INF.- *Melancia. Não...*

INQ.- *It's used to make stew. (Usa pafazê no cozido, cozidão).*

INF.- *Abóbora.*

INQ.- *Yes. Does it have another name around here? (É. I::sso tem outro nome por aqui?)*

INF.- *Jerimum.*

A frequent procedure in dialectical research is to persist in the question and reformulate it to obtain the expected item and the variants. The persistence in question 32 of the QFF evidenced not only the (acknowledgment) knowledge and / or preference for one of the items, but also the social evaluation of occurrences, besides revealing social spaces of use (market, fair, rural area) for each item. As can be seen in the following example, obtained from an interview in Manaus (Woman, 2nd age group, Elementary School).

Fragment 3

INQ.- *What about that thing that grows on the ground, big (mimicry), with a thick bark and it's red-yellowish inside? (É aquilo que dá assim no chã::o, que é grande com uma casca grossa e por dentro ele é meio vermelho amarelado?)*

INF.- *Abóbara.*

INQ.- *Is there another name for it here? (Aqui::fa... éh:: tem outro nome pra ele?)*

INF.- *Jurumu que a gente chama pra ele, jurumu né?*

INQ.- *Yes. Which do you use more? (É:: a senhora usa mais o que?)*

INF.- *Éh:: aqui nós chamamo mais abóbara.*

INQ.- *Yes. (É?)*

INF.- *É abóbara.*

INQ.- *Isn't jerimun more used around here? (Não usa mais o jerimum por aqui?)*

INF.- *Nã::o, mais é abóbara.*

INQ.- *Is that so? (Ah é?)*

INF.- *Que a ente compra mais em supermercado né.*

INQ.- *Abn*

INF.- *Aí compra mair é abóbara, que chama até:: de... tem até abobrinha né? aquela pequena...*

INQ.- *Yes. (É).*

INF.- *E tem a grande.*

INQ.- *The big one to make sweet. (A grande faz do::ce).*

INF.- *Agora lá poço terreno o pessual uso mais como jerimu.*

INQ.- *Where? (Pra onde?)*

INF.- *Chamo jerimu.*

INQ.- *Where is it called jerimum. (Onde que chama mais jerimu?)*

INF.- *Assim nas estrada quando a gente vai comprá.*

INQ.- *Ab::*

INF.- *Qu'eles grandão né?*

INQ.- *Yes. (É).*

INF.- *Chamo jerimu.*

INQ.- *So in the city... (Na cidade então...)*

INF.- *É abóbara.*

When respondents were asked about the breadth of use for the answers obtained in question 32 of the QFF, there was recognition of 'abóbora' (pumpkin) as more usual among those not born in the place and / or as more frequent in the commercial sector in urban area. In addition, there was also the recognition of the item 'jerimum' as more common among those born in the locality. Such responses have made us think of the pressure exerted by the influence of both the mobility of users and the supposed standardization established by the market law, because there is a co-occurrence of the items with differences of formality pointed out by the interviewees themselves. One variant seems to be more formal because of its use in commercial establishments, and another variant seems to be

more informal because of its use generally in more familiar and non-urban environments. Let's look at the following passage, obtained from an interview in Macapá (Woman, 1st age group, Elementary School).

Fragment 4

INQ.- *What is it called that thing that grows on the ground, which is big (mimicry), with a thick red-yellowish bark inside that you cook to eat...make stem... eat it with meat... make the meat and also put the chunks? (Como é que chama aquilo que dá no chão, que é gran::de com uma casca grossa vermelho-amarelada por dentro que se cozinha pra comer::... faz o cozidão ... come com carne... faz a carne e põe os pedaços também?)*

INF.- *Não é jerimum?*

INQ.- *That's it. (Isso)*

INF.- *Abóbora, né? Que vocês chama, né? (laughter)*

INQ.- *É (laughter)*

INF.- *Tem muita gente que chama abóbora. Nós chama jerimum aqui, né?*

INQ.- *Who calls it abóbora? (Quem é que chama abóbora?)*

INF.- *Muita gente. Muita gente chama de abóbora. Mas o pessoal pr'aí pra fora (risos), aí nós aqui é mais jerimum.*

INQ.- *Yes. Is it all one type jerimum? (É::... É tudo de um tipo jerimum?)*

INF.- *É*

INQ.- *Isn't there a difference? (Num tem diferença?)*

INF.- *Não, tem uns mais vermelhinho, né? tem uns pouco amarelo, os vermelhinho que é mais gostoso, que é mais doce.*

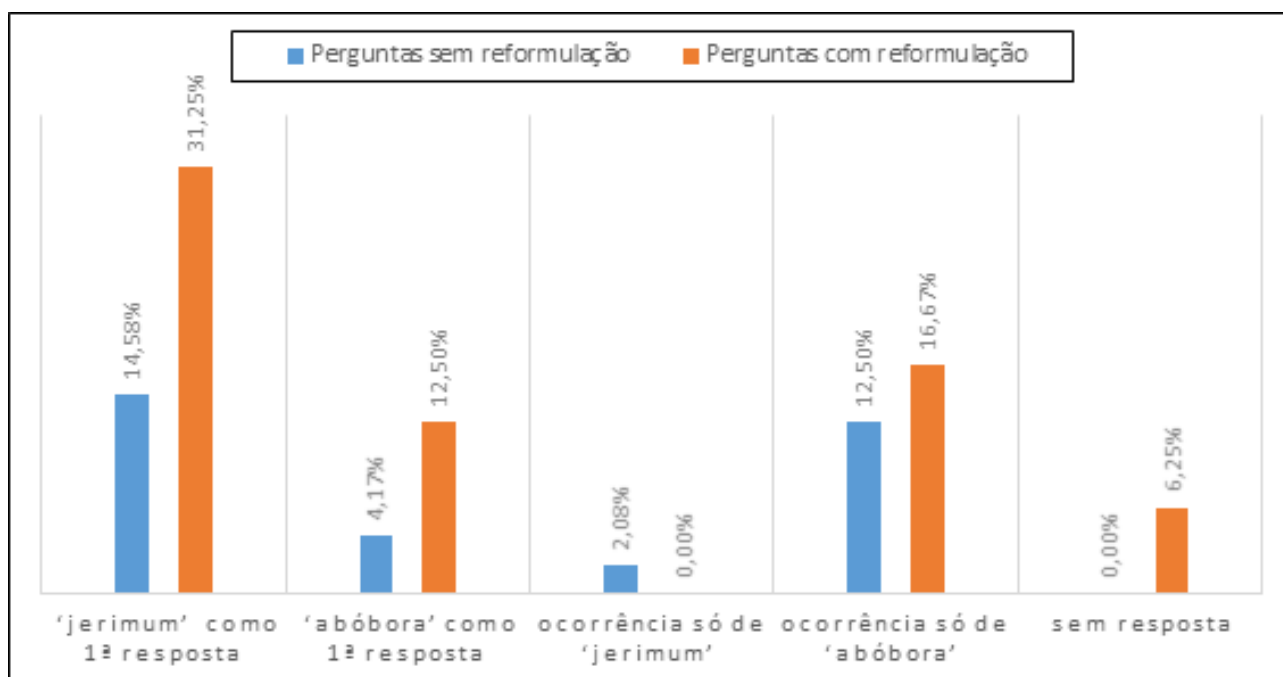
Besides the evaluation of the use of forms marked with differences of formality, the evidence of the type of sociolinguistic situation for the items in question⁵ can be reiterated by the fact that most interviewees mention both items. In all, there are 23 occurrences (47.92%) for 'jerimum' and 22 (45.83%) for 'pumpkin'. Thus, we can not affirm that there is a predominance of one of these items in the North Region, due to the sensible difference between the total responses to 'jerimum' and to 'pumpkin'.

As the nature of the QFF is hermetic to the lexicon, that is, the expected item must necessarily be obtained, since it is the context in which the phonological-phonological context is found for analysis, it is clear the need to change the way of formulating the question or orientation in the sense that the inquirers use the resource used in the reformulations to obtain the expected response.

⁵ We understand that the sociolinguistic configuration in the northern capitals for question 32 of the QFF points to a certain type of 'diglossia', in which there is an apparent separation between alternative variants with different social function. In order to confirm or refute this evidence, a more horizontal study of this item would be pertinent in the capitals and cities of the interior in the North.

It is curious to note that, in addition to the effort made to obtain the answer to question 32 of the QFF, the inquirer needs to invest in the acquisition of the expected response, which can not be replaced by a lexical variant for reasons already explained. Thus, despite having used the expressions that triggered the memory to obtain a response, it is necessary to make efforts to obtain ‘abóbora’ and not ‘jerimum’. It should be noted that, in both the question and the reformulated question, ‘jerimum’ was, in percentage terms, the item that appeared as the first response, which characterizes another complexity in the acquisition of items for the QFF (Graph 1).

Graph 1: Relation between question types and answers (QFF 32)



Source: The authors.

This difficulty is still expressed in the acquisition of only ‘jerimum’ as a response and in cases with no response, which adds, in all, 8,33%.

We emphasize that the schooling factor does not seem to have interfered in the establishment of these occurrences, since ‘jerimum’, supposed to be the item with features of greater regionality, was present in the responses of both people with Elementary and Higher Education. Similarly, the occurrence of ‘abóbora’ alone was not influenced by this factor.

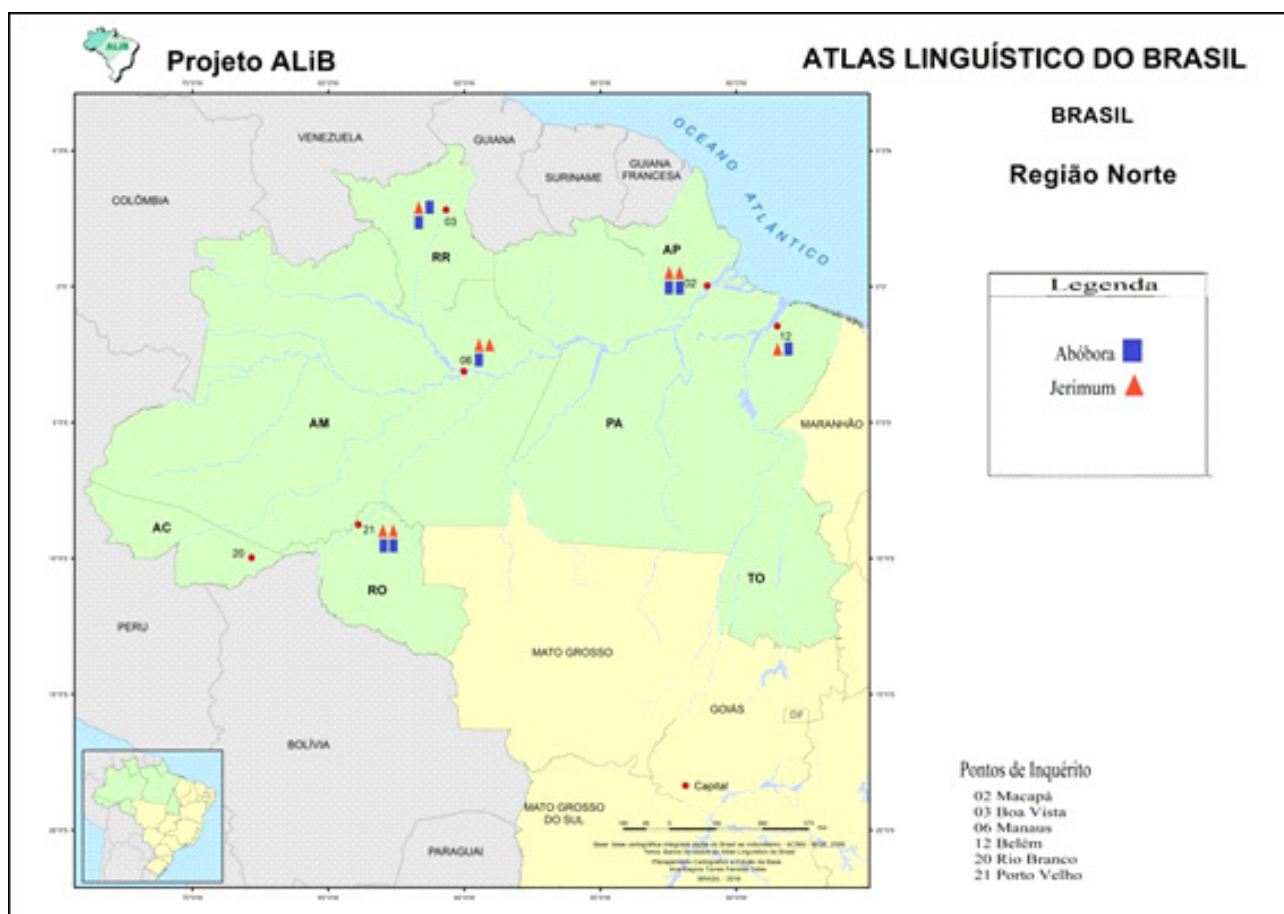
It is a practice in collecting data from the ALiB project that, at the end of the application of the questionnaire, the questions that have not been answered are resumed, which we refer to here as the ‘repergunta’ (to ask again). When analyzing the repercussions of question 32 of the QFF (4 total questions, making a percentage of 8.33%), we found that in none of them did the reformers adopt the strategy of reformulation in order to insert some information with cultural peculiarities related to the functionality of the fruit,

hence the difficulty in obtaining the answers in redoing the question. This led to the inquirer's suggestions and the expected response with a certain degree of uncertainty.

As we have seen, in addition to the types of questions, without reformulation and with reformulation, the questions re-written at the end of the questionnaire also pointed strongly to the relevance of cultural knowledge through regional specificities of the cooking of the North in data capture, including the expected response.

The linguistic letters⁶, presented below, show the difference regarding the number of answers provided by the interviewees in relation to the type of question, with or without reformulation. Figure 1 corresponds to the cartography of the items obtained before applying the reformulation of the question. Figure 2 corresponds to the representation of items for questions with reformulations.

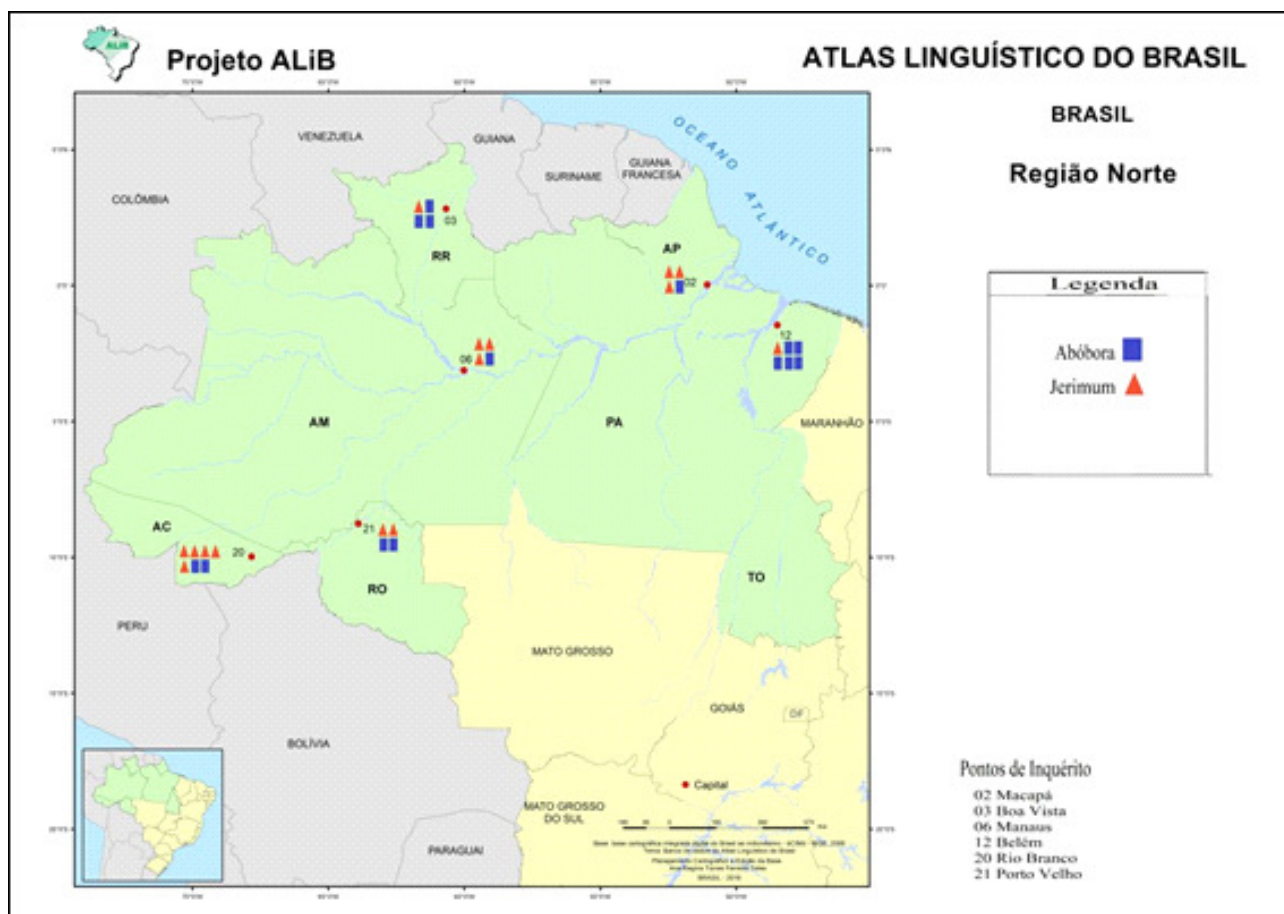
Figure 1: Result corresponding to the questions without reformulation (QFF 32)



Source: The authors.

⁶ In this study, the disposition of the results in the letters does not provide reference to the social stratification of the informants: age group, sex and schooling.

Figure 2: Result corresponding to the questions with reformulation (QFF 32)



Source: The authors.

The presented letters evidenced that the questions with reformulation implied more answers in the collection of data and point to the necessity of its use in this case.

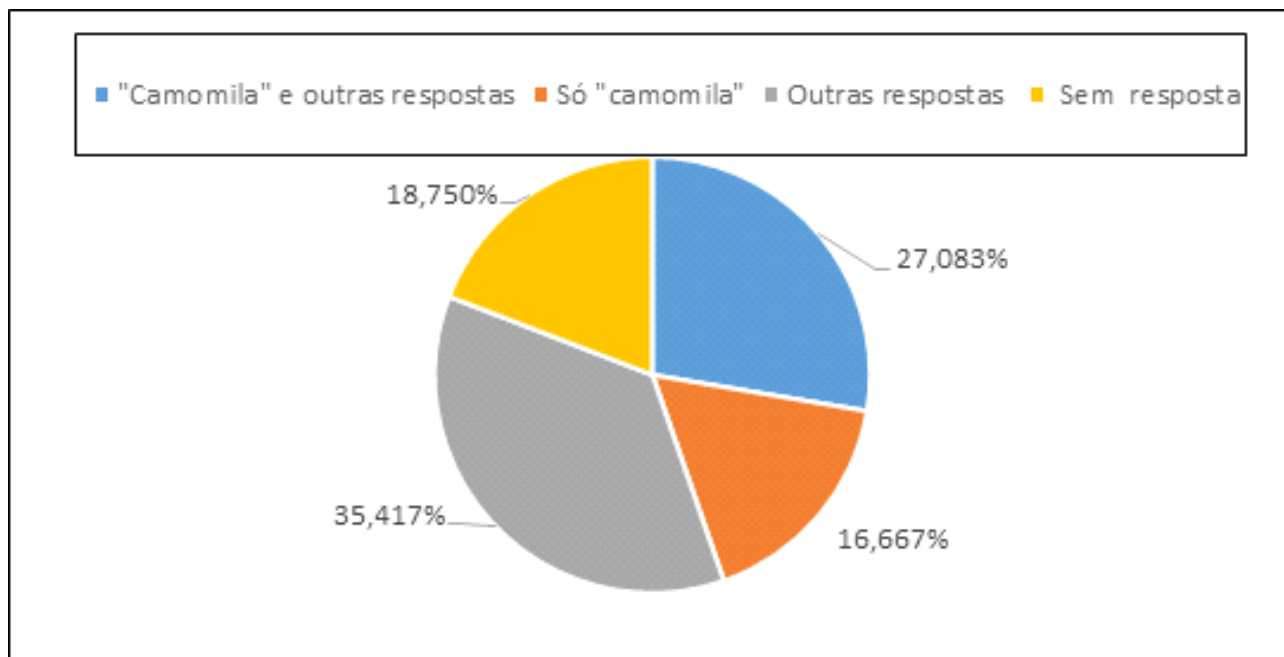
Tea for what?

Question 41 of the QSL states the following wording: “... *some little white flowers with yellow kernels, or dried flowers that are bought at the pharmacy or supermarket and are used to make a sweet, scented yellow tea, good for the baby / baby belly pain and even for adult and also to calm down? Show*” (ALiB NATIONAL PROJECT COMMITTEE, 2001, p. 24). One of the expected variants, ‘camomila’ (chamomile), was not easily answered. Listening to the application of the question shows that the inquirer had to make a great effort to obtain this answer.

The results for this question show significant differences in relation to the results related to question 32 of the QFF, analyzed in the previous section. This question had a low response rate before reformulation. Here, the response rate is high, but in many cases they do not match the expected form and its variants, or the description presented in the question. ‘Camomila’ presented frequency of 43.75%, in the sum of the frequency only of ‘chamomile’ and of that item with other forms; while other forms without the item ‘camomila’ and the

unanswered cases presented higher index, making a total of 54.167%, according to Graph 2.

Graph 2: Frequency of camomila and other answers(QSL 41)



Source: The authors.

Regarding the types of question for QSL 41, the most frequent occurrence was the questions without reformulation, whose basic information of the original question was kept by the inquirer, such as: description of the flower (tea raw material), place where to buy the herb, the color of the tea, medicinal benefit (tummy pain and soothing), usually accompanied by the presentation of the sachet containing the dried herb. On the other hand, the changes in the questions relate to the insertion of indications of use of the plant related to aesthetics (hair bleaching), which are not part of the original question. In all, there were 43 questions without reformulation (89.584%) versus 4 questions with reformulation (8.333%). It is worth remembering that 2,083% of the total interviews correspond to questions not asked.

We understand that none of the two types of question (with or without reformulation) brought significant frequency to assert data collection success for one or other type of question, since there was only a slight difference between the number of occurrences in the cases where the responses obtained were only limited to the item 'camomila'. The questions without reformulation, that is, those with medicinal therapeutic indications, had 5 occurrences (10.417%), whereas the questions with aesthetic indications, that is, those with reformulations, had 3 occurrences (6.25%).

The questions without reformulation, whose answers include the 'camomila' item and other answers revealed a certain kind of 'ambiguity' stemming from pragmatic questions

rather than lexical flexibility (or rather, lexical variation) common to the type of questionnaire used, the QSL. Precisely because neither the supposed knowledge of the plant via the contents of the sachet presented to the interviewees and the description of the flower, the raw material of the tea, were sufficient to obtain the expected response. On the contrary, the amount of occurrence for the other items without ‘chamomile’ (35.417%), cf. Graph 2, proves the evidence of pragmatic ‘ambiguity’. There are more than ten items recorded for this issue as opposed to the sparse occurrence of the “expected response”.

As the medicinal plants referred to by the interviewees are very different from each other, both in relation to the plant itself and the organ used to make tea, we understand that there are no alternative use items for ‘camomila’ in the region, nor is there a correlation between the description of the flower, the visualization of the herb in the sachet and the therapeutic indication referred to in the question, by the interviewee. This points both to the lack of knowledge or little use of the ‘camomila’ plant in northern Brazil, as well as to the inevitability of contextually specific uses. That said, we understand that the function of the plant via medicinal therapeutic indications allowed the variety of items with properties and benefits approximate or equivalent to that of ‘camomila’. Of the herbs mentioned for pains in the belly and to calm, the most recurrent were: *erva cidreira* (13 occurrences), *erva doce* (13 occurrences), *hortelã* (9 occurrences), *boldo* (6 occurrences). Like the highlights present in the following section, obtained from an interview in Porto Velho (Man, 2nd age group, Higher Education).

Fragment 5

INQ.- *A little white flower with a yellow kernel, a dried flower that you buy at the pharmacy to make tea. This one... (Uma florzinha branca com o miolo amarelinho, uma florzinha seca que se compra na farmácia pra chá. Isso aqui (ININT) essa...)*

INF.- *Flor branca.*

INQ.- *This one*

INF.- *Dex’ovê aqui.*

INQ.- *To make tea.*

INF.- *Confesso qu’eu num tô sentindo...*

INQ.- *It makes tea for babies, a yellow tea, it’s good for belly ache too. (Ela faz chá pa bebê, um chá amarelinho, que é bom pa dor de barriga também).*

INF.- *É... num é **sacaca** não, não?*

INQ.- *No, it has a white flower with a yellow kernel we buy it at the pharmacy. (Não, ela tem uma:: florzinha branca com miolo amarelinho a gente compra na farmácia...)*

INF.- *Eu sei que tem... eu tomo muito chás, mas eu num sei se é:: eu num vi in natura assim, eu tomo **chá de boldo, chá de sacaca**, eh::... tudo isso é bom pro estômago, eh:: **picão**. Agora essa flor aí...*

INQ.- *Now we can also find it in little bags at the grocery store. (Essa agora a gente já acha no supermercado também pra comprá em saquinho).*

INF.- *Uhn hum. Rapaz eu acho...*

- INQ.- *What tea do you give to a baby here? (O que dá pra nenem aqui de chá?)*
- INF.- *Ah dá erva cidreira, eh::capim santo,*
- INQ.- *Abnham*
- INF.- *Eh:: qual é outra? É:: hortelão, eh:: até folha de laranja...*
- INQ.- *There is one which has a quite yellow flower, the tea gets quite yellow. Here are some of its flowers. (Tem uma que tem a florzinha bem::amareli::nha, o chá fica bem:: amareli::nho. Aqui tem umas florzinhas dela (ININT))*
- INF.- *É, não eu já sei de que é só qu'eu num tô lembrado o nome.*
- INQ.- *Abn*
- INF.- *Eu tô... tô lembrando o nome não.*
- INQ.- *You'll remember it later. It's not a problem if you don't remember. (Depois cé lembra. Se não lembrar também não tem problema).*

The occurrences highlighted in Fragment 5 show the knowledge of popular uses of medicinal plants in the region with benefits equivalent to those of chamomile. As the symptom of belly pain can have varied causes, perhaps this has favored the variety of occurrences: 'chá de boldo', 'erva cidreira', 'picão', 'capim santo', 'sacaca'. All these plants have their leaves harnessed in the empirical form of tea. We note that the 'sacaca' is considered by Tieppo (2007) as a plant widely used in the north of the country in the form of tea from its leaves and stem bark, with therapeutic indications for the treatment of diabetes, diarrhea, malaria, fever, gastrointestinal disorders, among other benefits. Chamomile, on the other hand, is also considered a medicinal plant for home use, popularly recognized for its medicinal and aesthetic therapeutic indications, as well as by the ingestion as tea. However, the tea is prepared from the flowers of the plant. This information is taken up by the inquirer three times in Fragment 5, which points to the non-establishment of the correlation between the description of the flower of the chamomile, the therapeutic indications of the plant referred to in the question and the medicinal plants actually mentioned by the interviewee.

If we compare the occurrences of only 'camomila' (16.667%) with the other items mentioned without 'camomila' (35.417%), we will notice that the difference of 18.75% between the types of occurrence is also revealing of the variety of items used as responses, depending on the diversity of plants with medicinal properties commonly used in the Northern Region, as evidenced by Fragment 5.

Fragment 6, obtained from an interview in Manaus (Woman, 1st age group, Higher Education), presents one of the few empirical examples of plant recognition. But this recognition is due to the smell, not the visualization of the dried flowers of chamomile in the sachet or the description of the flower. This is because the interviewee claims to make frequent use of chamomile for medical and aesthetic purposes; in the latter case, to take advantage of aesthetic / hair benefits.

Fragment 6

INQ.- *Do you know this here? What do you make with it... (Vo... será que você conhece isso aqui? Que você... lá a gente costuma fazê...)*

INF.- *É, é orégano?*

INQ.- *No. We make tea for... (Não. A gente costuma fazer chá pra...)*

INF.- *Não. Camomila.*

INQ.- *for babies. That's it. (pra nenem. Isso).*

INF.- *Camomila.*

INQ.- *Why doesn't anyone know that? It's already the third... fourth person, you're the first who... (Por que ninguém conhece isso aí? Já é a terceira... quarta pessoa, você foi a primeira pessoa que::...)*

INF.- *Adoro chá de camomila.*

INQ.- *Ab::*

INF.- *Eu gosto de camomila e também uso camomila no cabelo.*

INQ.- *Ab::*

INF.- *O cheiro é comum pra mim...*

INQ.- *What could I ask the people... why... (O que eu poderia perguntar pr'as pessoas eh:: por que...)*

INF.- *Qual é o nome daquela... daquela planta que a gente passa no cabelo pra clareá (risos)*

INQ.- *Oh... ok, I'll ask. (Ab:: tá eu vou perguntar).*

INF.- *Ou então de que é aquele chá que se usa pra relaxar? Aí devem falá erva cidre::ra...*

INQ.- *They said erva cidreira, they said erva doce, they said... then I even said that we use it a lot for the stomach, you know? (Falaram erva cidrera, falaram erva doce, falaram::... daí até falei que lá a gente usa muito pra estômago sabe?)*

INF.- *Ab::*

INQ.- *So, if you have lunch and feel that it won't... do you good, you make tea... (Então se você almoça e sente que num vai... fazê bem, você faz chá...)*

INF.- *Fala do cabelo, que mulhé costuma comprá eh:: shampoo de camomila pra clariá o cabelo.*

INQ.- *we have another name for camomila there (Uhn hum é vo... porque lá nos temos outro nome pra camomila)*

INF.- *Ab:: aqui não.*

INQ.- *Which is (maçanilha). (Que é maçanilha).*

INF.- *Não, esse eu nuca ouvi.*

INQ.- *Yes maçanilha. So I wanted to see if there was another name, a different name here... (É maçanilha. Então eu queria vê se tinha um outro nome, um nome diferente aqui...)*

INF.- *Não tem. Camomila mesmo.*

INQ.- *Abnham*

It is important to mentioned that, although the occurrence of 'chamomile' as a single response (without occurrence of other forms with the same function) was only used

by people with higher education, 'chamomile' was also recorded in the responses of people from both elementary and higher education.

In Fragment 6, we observed that the visualization of the sachet containing the herb for the preparation of the tea promoted a response with uncertainty: "Is it oregano?", Undone by the recognition of chamomile via smell, according to the interviewee, after mentioning the function of the plant: "No. We used to make tea for ...". Another example of lack of knowledge of the chamomile plant can be seen in Fragment 7, below. For the interviewee of Belém (Woman, 1st age group, Elementary School), the conflict is established between the description of the flower and the function described in the question because of the knowledge she has of a flower very similar (daisy), but with different functionality. Because the daisy flower and the flower of chamomile are similar, the function of the plant, in this case, was fundamental to establish doubt in the interviewee. Daisy (margarida) is an ornamental plant; chamomile, in turn, is medicinal.

Fragment 7

INQ.- *And (E:)*

INQ.- *And what is it called some little white flowers with a yellow kernel, we usually buy at the pharmacy, we can make tea to drink and make tea that can be soothing. (E::com' é que chama umas florezinhas brancas com o miolo amareli::nho?... é:: que geralmente a gente compra na farmácia, serve pra fazê chá pra bebê ou serve pra fazê chá que serve como calmante).*

INF.- *Olha, eu num sei, porque... que eu sei flores brancas meio... centro amarelinho é a margarida, né?*

INQ.- *Uhm!*

INF.- *Num é isso, não faz chá, né? Essa outra, num se... tem a cidreira, né? Mas, a cidreira num...*

INQ.- *Do you know another? (Conhece outra?)*

INF.- *O chá da cidreira só é da folha num é flor.*

INQ.- *What about a soothing tea, do you know any? (É chá pra acalmar a senhora conhece?)*

INF.- *Ah, eu já sei é a flor de laranjeira, não!... Não é flor de laranjeira... também, esqueci.*

INQ.- *You mam (A senhora).*

INF.- *Tem de maracujá, mas... maracujá não é da flor... num se... camomila não é! Camomila, camomila não!*

INQ.- *You... what is camomila like to you? (Você... como é que é a camomila p'ra senhora?)*

INF.- *Também não sei como é!*

INQ.- *You have never seen it? (A senhora nunca viu?)*

INF.- *Ouço falou em chá de camomila, mas nunca vi.*

INQ.- *Oh, you've never seen it! (Ah, a senhora nunca viu!)*

INF.- *Não conheço!*

INQ.- *Now tell me something this camomila tea we use for baby's stomach ache, to calm, do we? (Agora diga uma coisa esse chá de camomila a gente usa assim pra dor de barriga de nenê, pra acalmar, usa?)*

INF.- *É!... Já ouvi falar assim pra acalmar, né? Só isso que eu sei.*

INQ.- *Hmm ok. (Hum tá!)*

Fragment 7 makes it clear that the informant does not (recognize) know about chamomile or her indication for belly pain. In the North, other teas are used for this purpose.

It was the difficulty of apprehending chamomile and its variants that brought to light the evidence of frequent uses of other medicinal plants with the same function as chamomile. It should also be noted that mention of ‘camomila’ did not necessarily imply the (recognition) knowledge or use of the plant by the interviewees, as is clear from Fragment 8, obtained from an interview in Boa Vista (Man, 2nd age group, Elementary School).

Fragment 8

INQ.- *A little flower... yes we make tea with it. . like uh... for children... with a little yellow kernel... This one for example... this one here look. (Uma florzinha... é que faz chá... como o... pra criança... com miolinho amarelinha... Essa aqui por exemplo... essa aqui oh).*

INF.- *hum eu sei. Tem, a erva cidreira, tem a hortelã.*

INQ.- *What about this one. This little white flower with this little yellow kernel? (E ess'aqui. E essa florzinha branca com essa miolinho amarelinho?)*

INF.- *Essa num...*

INQ.- *Sometimes we buy it at the pharmacy to make tea for babies. (As vezes a gente compra na farmácia pra fazer chá pra bebê).*

INF.- *(laughter) eu tô querendo olhá o nome (laughter)*

INQ.- *(laughter)*

INF.- *Camomila, é?*

INQ.- *Hmmhmm, Chamomile! (Ahnam, Camomila!)*

INF.- *Camomila! Eu nunca tinha visto, não. É a primeira vez qu'eu tô vendo*

INQ.- *Is that so? (Ah é?)*

INF.- *É!*

INQ.- *Is there a lot of this plant? (Tem muito essa planta?)*

INF.- *(Tosse) aqui não tem, não.*

INQ.- *No. (Não).*

INF.- *Não aqui é muito difícil. Nunca vi, não!*

INQ.- *Oh! (Ah!)*

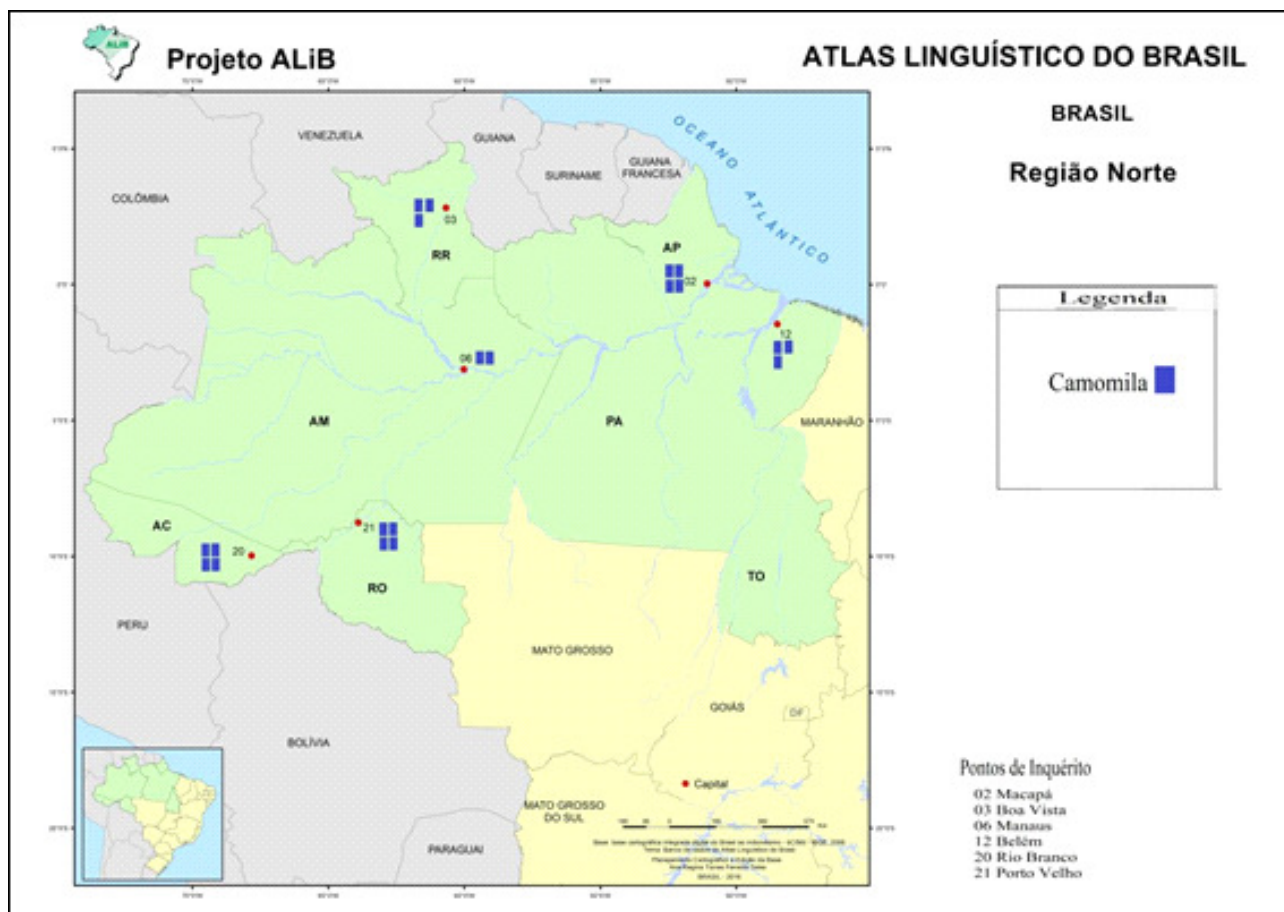
INF.- *Eu já vi muitas planta medicinal, mas essa não!*

The pragmatic ‘ambiguity’ revealed in question 41 of the QSL points, in our view, to limits on the apprehension of the expected response and of variants, given the presumed ignorance or little use of the chamomile plant in the North of Brazil. This brings consequences for the cartographic representation, produces dialectological voids.

If we resort to the questions to be asked again at the end of the questionnaire, we observe a prior indication of supposed dialectological voids, due to the lack of the ‘camomila’

response. The total number of questions is 54.167%, which means that more than half of the respondents gave other answers or did not respond, compared to the 43.75% frequency for responses that include the item ‘camomila’. The cartographic representation that follows (Figure 3) shows the confrontation between presence versus absence of the item ‘camomila’.

Figure 3: Diatopic distribution of chamomile



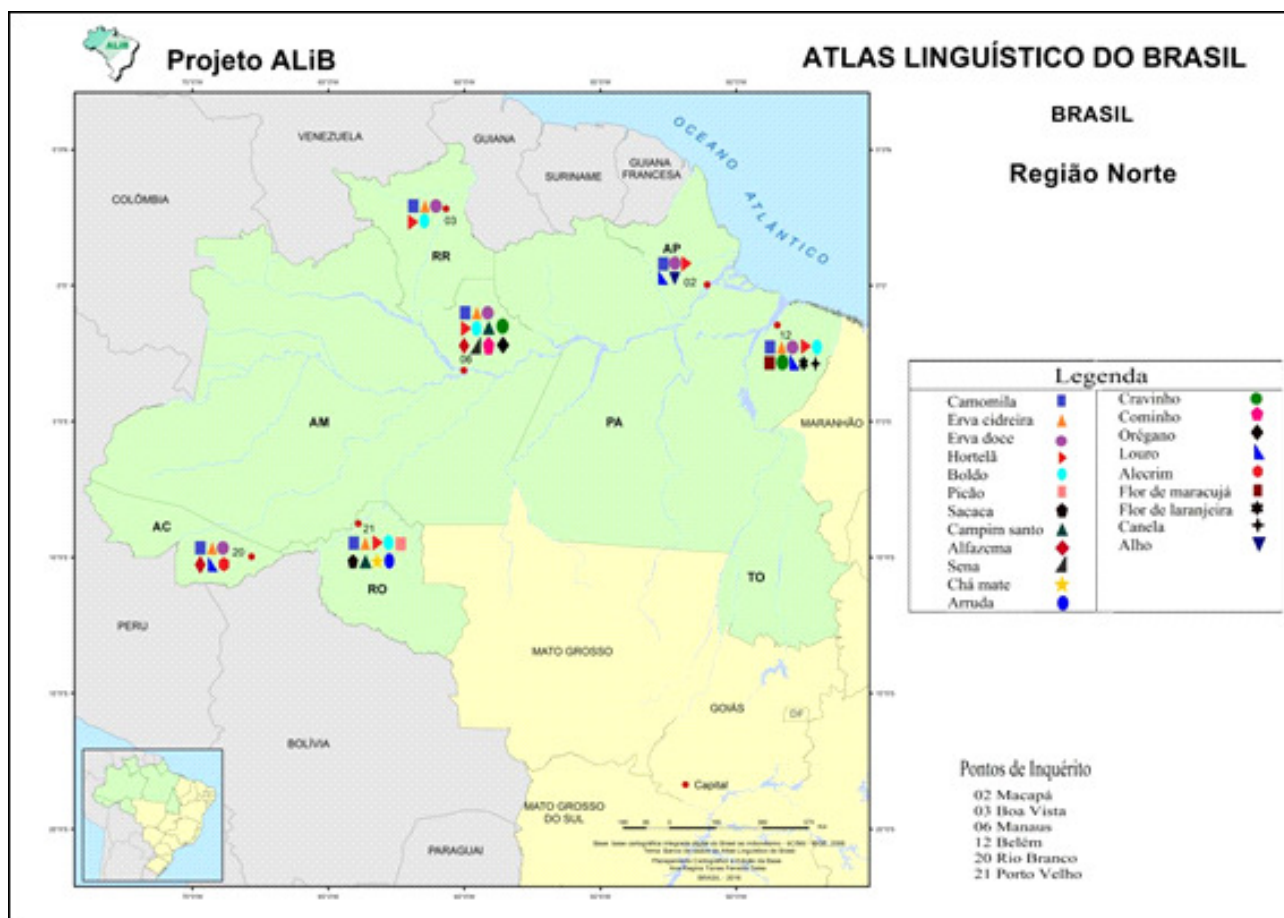
Source: The authors.

However, if the dialectological void corresponds roughly to the lack of response foreseen in the QSL, which is “denouncing the most diverse information and pertinent to the linguistic confrontation, in the same way as the registration of use” (CARDOSO, 2010, p. 15), it is pertinent, then, that we also understand the empirical condition of the presence of this answer, since the obtaining of the answer may not presuppose effectively use, as is the case of question 41.

The analysis of this question and its answers implied the questioning of the existence of voids due to the confrontation of the data from the presence versus absence, as well as in the questioning of the relation of uses of the items effectively mentioned and understood as the expected response, in the face of the little firmness in the knowledge and uses of the chamomile plant.

We understand that the problem does not really affect the questions with or without reformulation, unlike question 32 of the QFF for the item ‘abóbora’, where the insertion of information with cultural particularities, activated in memory by the expressions ‘cozidão’ (stew) or ‘coloca na carne cozida’ (put in cooked meat). In question 41 of the QSL, it is the variety of medicinal plants present in Brazil and its innumerable therapeutic resources, with uses that vary from one region to another, which design a “physical reality with which the cultural context identifies itself” (OLIVEIRA, 1997). This is what the following cartographic representation shows.

Figure 4: Diatopic distribution of ‘Chamomile’ and other medicinal plants



Source: The authors.

With regard to chamomile, we can say that the application of the question as presented in the questionnaire allowed us to know that its use is restricted in the North of Brazil, that its recognition can be given through information related to aesthetic uses, hair care and that it seems not be used as tea for medicinal purposes linked to abdominal pain in the region. As we have seen, there are other teas used for such.

In this sense, information on aesthetic use should be used if one wants to know where the use of chamomile is given and its variants, as one of the informants suggests, or to maintain information on medicinal benefits if one wants to know what types of teas are

used for that purpose in the region. The use of images and smell are little indicated, since the plant seems not to be common in the region.

In sum, the difficulty of obtaining an answer in both questions highlights one of the aspects of the dialectic research emphasized by Rossi (1967) in terms of “fatality of the impositions of the regional”.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The results presented in this article firstly point out the need of the multidisciplinary team and representatives of several regions in the elaboration of questionnaires that have national scope. But this does not solve the problem, because there will always be aspects that will be ignored in these instruments of data collection. It is during the field experience that these gaps are identified and that precious data that is not intended to be collected, as we have seen in this article, is collected, given the range of new, unforeseen information that arises during data collection of this nature. The positive impact of the reformulation, the reach of the pragmatic, of the cultural and learning in the field must be taken into account in the (re) composition of questionnaires. On the other hand, it should be emphasized that the way in which the questionnaires were presented brought rich learning about the lexical, diatopic and cultural variation of the communities surveyed. The experiences faced by the inquirers and the alternatives found to obtain the answers are also a teaching of how to do field research as challenging as the one proposed by the ALiB. It seems necessary to share them, so that the answers are obtained less painfully. Investing in updating these project questionnaires may be a new challenge for ALiB. We hope to have presented some reflections that contribute to this.

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