

# *Strategies to Obtain Answers on ALiB Interviews about Question 054 - Aftosa (Foot-and-Mouth Disease) in the Capital Cities of Midwest and Southeast of Brazil*

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## **Abstract:**

Based on the theoretical-methodological precepts of Dialectology and Sociolinguistic, this article aims at describing the strategies used by the inquirers of the Linguistic Atlas of Brazil Project (ALiB) in the reformulation of question 054 from the phonetic-phonological questionnaire (QFF) to obtain the answer *aftosa* (*foot-and-mouth disease*) in interviews carried out in the Midwest and Southeast capitals. Therefore, we recollect the historic route of Geolinguistics and of the Project ALiB, we reflect on the steps of the geolinguistic research, focusing on the inquirer's conduct, we comment on the relevance of world knowledge and shared knowledge of informant and inquirer for the success of studies of this nature, and finally, we analyze the strategies of the inquirer to obtain the corresponding answer to the question aforementioned, making brief comments about the socio-economic formation of the regions in question. The *corpus* of this study consists of interviews from the surveys of the Project ALiB, which reveal that *aftosa*, because it is a variant connected to the country life, was mentioned mostly by speakers of the Midwest, whereas in the Southeast, there are more reformulations of the questions, probably because this word is not part of these informants' daily life.

## **Keywords:**

Reformulation of questions. Strategies of inquirers. Linguistic Atlas of Brazil.

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# Strategies to Obtain Answers on ALiB Interviews about Question 054 – Aftosa (Foot-and-Mouth Disease) in the Capital Cities of Midwest and Southeast of Brazil

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## INITIAL NOTES

Drawn on the metaphor formulated by Silva Neto (1960), we can define the performance of Linguistic Atlases as snapshots that unveil the panchronicity of the linguistic phenomena like clocks striking the diachrony, at the same time that their strikes rumble the synchrony of a historic language, revealing diasystems (a set of systems and subsystems) inside the same language (BRANDÃO, 1991).

Following this line of study, the dialectological method, through Geolinguistics, presupposes a record on maps of linguistic forms (phonic, lexical or grammatical), obtained from direct interviews in a delimited network of points, showing visually the distribution of variants in geographical spaces and allowing the intercomparison of these various forms (COSERIU, 1987).

In spite of that, prior to the final result, by means of the linguistic maps published in linguistic atlases, we observe areas where isoglosses (virtual lines that delimit differences and similarities between dialects) can be outlined. Those, in turn, are characterized, regarding the nature of the linguistic phenomenon in question, as isophonic, isolexical, isomorphic or syntactic, according to Ferreira and Cardoso (1994).

According to Tarallo (1999, p. 71), “The linguistic atlas of a community can, for example, provide valuable data to the study of the phonological, or even lexical, variation”, acting as “inventories of forms”, both innovative and conservative, and attesting the vitality of the language. The variation is, in fact, inherent in language: every linguistic change presupposes variation, but not all that varies undergoes change (TARALLO, 1999, p. 63).

In a geolinguistic study, certain actions that aim to validate the methodological procedures are indispensable, such as the selection of interviews points, the establishment of collecting techniques, the transcribing processes, the data collection and tabulation, the description (through cartography, for example) and the analysis of linguistic facts.

The methods and phases aforementioned should be clearly defined and described to legitimize the research implementation. In the process of data collection *in loco*, the researchers should anticipate various problems, making a checklist of the materials to be taken to the field, such as, voice recorders, questionnaires, prints or pictures of the referents (whose denominations should not lead to doubts), *realia* (presentation of the object), among others.

Because of the Linguistic Atlas of Brazil (ALiB) and from the explanations provided by Vanderci de Andrade Aguilera, Coordinator of Paraná Division we could reflect on those steps in the process of the geolinguistic research. We were struck by the fact that there are few studies regarding the techniques to reformulate questions aiming to obtain answers, mainly in relation to the Phonetic-Phonological Questionnaire (FFQ). Because it consists of controlled questions, the FFQ requires precise and direct answers referring to specific words, which can provide comparative studies of phonetic-phonological phenomena noticed in the pronunciation.

Based on a study that quantified the FFG questions with the greatest number of non-responses in 25 Brazilian capitals (AGUILERA; YIDA, 2008), question number 054 - *aftosa* (foot-and-mouth disease) - was selected due to the significant number of abstentions. In fact, when analyzing the transcriptions and revisions of the interviews, we noticed the difficulty in recording the variant in question, which led us to believe that there would be a great number of reformulations of the question by the inquirers.

The choice of this *corpus*, composed of the interviews carried out in Southeast and Midwest capitals, was based on socioeconomic peculiarities of these regions, which could lead to greater or lesser easiness to obtain the answers expected by the inquirer due to on the one hand, the more rural base formation of the Midwest and on the other hand, the intense urbanization and the cosmopolitan character of the Southeast.

This happens because it is undeniable the connection between the way in which society deals with language and the economic support of the localities (DIÉGUES JR, 1980), as well as personal experiences and the world knowledge of the speaker. After all, regions which have a pastoral economic base reflect in their speech denominations linked to the rural semantic area.

Therefore, in this study, we aim at describing the strategies used by the inquirers when reformulating QFF question 054 in interviews carried out in the Southeast and Midwest capitals. We also aim: i) at quantifying the interviews that presented reformulation of questions; ii) at analysing the strategies used by the inquirer to reformulate questions; iii) at researching the connection between the socioeconomic reality and the attainment, or not, of answers.

Thereby, we intend to share a geolinguistic *modus faciendi* with novice researchers and with experienced researchers, since scientific works should contribute to new investigative levels, indicating research paths, successes and errors as reinforced by Aguilera, Amâncio and Paes (2003).

In order to do so, we describe the methodological procedures used; we present a historical account of Geolinguistics and the Project ALiB; we discuss the steps of the geolinguistic enterprise with a focus on the stance of the inquirer; we compile a list of research on the importance of world knowledge and knowledge shared between informant and inquirer and finally, we analyze the strategies of the inquirer to obtain the answer to question 054 (*aftosa*) and situate briefly the socioeconomic formation of Midwest and Southeast Regions.

## METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The *corpus* of this research comprises excerpts from interviews drawn from the inquiries of ALiB Project referring to the QFF question 054, which is taken place *in loco*, following the methodology of Pluridimensional Dialectology (THUN, 1998), and adding the traditional Dialectology to Sociolinguistics. The interviews, transcriptions and revisions were conducted by the teams of ALiB Project.

According to the Project Questionnaire (ALiB NATIONAL COMMITTEE, 2001), the initial formulation of this question is as follows: "... a disease that occurs in cattle, usually in the mouth? It causes fever. If you do not isolate the sick cattle, the others become sick too. It is necessary to vaccinate the cattle so that they do not get this disease". The purpose is to verify if there is the record of the phonetic-phonological process denominated svarabhakti or anaptyxis<sup>1</sup> - insertion of the vowel /e/ or /i/ into speech, resulting in *af[e]tosa* or *af[i]osa*, in addition to the apheresis or not (drop of the first vowel of a word).

The *corpus* of this research consists of responses of 56 informants, eight in each capital, distributed in 7 localities: 4 Southeast capitals (Belo Horizonte, Sao Paulo, Vitoria and Rio de Janeiro), and 3 Midwest capitals (Cuiaba, Campo Grande and Goiania). In the Table 1, we present the profile of these informants.

**Table 1:** Profile of the informants of the capitals

| Informant | Level of education | Age group            | Sex    |
|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|--------|
| 01        | Elementary School  | I (18-30 years old)  | Male   |
| 02        | Elementary School  | I (18-30 years old)  | Female |
| 03        | Elementary School  | II (50-65 years old) | Male   |
| 04        | Elementary School  | II (50-65 years old) | Female |
| 05        | Higher Education   | I (18-30 years old)  | Male   |
| 06        | Higher Education   | I (18-30 years old)  | Female |
| 07        | Higher Education   | II (50-65 years old) | Male   |
| 08        | Higher Education   | II (50-65 years old) | Female |

Source: ALiB Project data (prepared by the authors).

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<sup>1</sup> Coutinho (1974, p. 147) defines svarabhakti or anaptyxis as a special epenthesis that consists of undoing a group of consonants through the intercalation of a vowel. According to Collischonn (2004, p. 62), many words derived from Latin, German and other languages had consonants in the final position of the syllable. Such structures were reduced or eliminated by archaic Portuguese; nevertheless, these forms became part again of the Portuguese lexicon and have been modified by the Brazilian Portuguese, which tends to transform closed syllables into open ones. Lee (1993), in turn, recognizes that svarabhakti is present in the Brazilian Portuguese, even among educated people, as a way to avoid the combination of unpleasant sounds to the ears. About the subject: "The svarabhakti in Brazil of the XVII, XVIII and XIX centuries - a reflection from the *corpora* of LHisPB" (GHOLMIE, 2017).

The interviews excerpts were collected and organized through the *Microsoft Office Excel* spreadsheet editor, from the comparison of the last revision of the transcriptions with the recordings of the inquiries. In addition, we considered all questions in which a new item was added as reformulated, with modification of the question contained in ALiB Questionnaires (ALiB NATIONAL COMMITTEE, 2001).

Therefore, the reformulations<sup>2</sup> of question 054 of the QFF were described and organized in tables by location and region, in order to allow a comparison between the interviews in the two regions of the country, due to their socioeconomic specificities, in order to verify to what extent they may affect the need for the use of this type of strategy by the inquirers.

## **HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF GEOLINGUISTICS AND THE ALiB PROJECT**

Because of the dissemination of Saussurian thoughts, linguistics has gained autonomous science *status*, because it not only describes the linguistic facts, but also seeks a coherent explanation for their occurrence. Before Saussure, language studies served as basis for the consolidation of comparative-historical studies which sought to establish similarities between classical languages (Greek, Latin, Persian, Sanskrit and German), typically adopting purposes of genesis and reconstruction.

Around 1870, a group of linguists known as “neogrammarians” came to another type of language study, discovering sound mutations according to the environment. Saussure, however, went further, since he could already see this relation of sound change with the arbitrariness of signs, seeing that this change does not apply directly to the signs themselves, but to the sounds or, more precisely, to a single sound in a specific environment.

According to Culler (1979), Saussure felt some progress with the work of the American William Dwight Whitney who began to raise questions about the sign: “Language is, in fact, an institution, a body of predominant uses in a given community, a treasure of words and forms. It is an arbitrary and conventional sign” (CULLER, 1979, p. 59). However, for the Swiss linguist, this line of reasoning is broader: “meanings exist because there are differences of meaning [...], that is, I can have a single form with several concepts. What will give me the precise definition is its place within the language system” (CULLER, 1979, p. 60).

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<sup>2</sup> We reinforce/point out that, in the majority of the interviews, in addition to the reformulation at the end, retakes\* to the question were applied. We reinforce that there can be reformulations in both the question that appears in the QFF and in the retake, provided that new information is added to the original question. Therefore, the reformulations were analyzed by each interview (both in the QFF and in the retake).

\* Retake: when the inquirer goes back to the same question at the end of the interview.

Therefore, for Saussure (1969), linguistics should focus on the study of the language conceived as a system of signs and rules, established and adopted by a social group for the exercise of language. Speech, in turn, would be the individual side of language and would consist of the speaker's use of that linguistic system to communicate (Saussure, 1969). Thus, after establishing the dichotomy between *langue* and *parole*, the Genevan master focused on the study of language, defining it for the first time as the specific object of study of linguistics; as to speech, it seems to have been left aside.

However, it is important to note that, even before the end of the 19th century, dialectal works had already been initiated by some linguists, especially by Ascoli in Italy and by Schuchardt in Austria. These two scholars refuted the idea of the neogrammarians and fought for the recognition of the dialectological studies, because they considered the study of living languages the best source for the knowledge of languages of the past (RODRÍGUEZ, 1998).

Due to the concern with the studies of dialects, the research in this area has intensified to the point of developing a new methodology, known as Linguistic Geography or Geolinguistics. For this reason, the heterogeneity revealed in the language through speech is the focus of interest of the dialectologist, whose studies turn to the complexities of the linguistic system defined by the geographical differences.

All in all, the methodology developed by Linguistic Geography has provided a great progress to the studies of dialects, since the materialization of geographical maps entails: (i) to study *in loco* one or more linguistic phenomena; (ii) to draw conclusions about the innovative or conservative character of certain areas traced by the isoglosses; (iii) to record forms that tend to be no longer in use and to disappear over time; and (iv) to record non-dictionary terms because they are not shown in written texts.

## LINGUISTIC ATLAS: FIRST EXPERIENCES

According to Ferreira *et al* (1996), several atlases were planned, but not all of them were completed, and their methodology varied greatly, particularly in light of the experience of the researchers who carried them out. The first work based on the method of mapping the language, of which only a chapter was published in 1881, appeared in Germany from the studies of Georg Wenker, and was entitled *Linguistic Atlas of Northern and Central Germany*. This work was not successful, because the researcher, being an adept of phonetic laws and analogy, disregarded important factors, such as social variables, and his research method was limited to questionnaires sent by correspondence (CARDOSO, 2010).

Later, although Jules Gilliéron was not the precursor of the first linguistic atlases, it was because of his work, *Atlas Linguistique de la France* (ALF), published in Paris between 1902 and 1910, that Linguistic Geography became known and respected. Gilliéron states that he counted only on the assistance of the inquirer Edmond Edmont, who was not a linguist, but had a passion for dialects and an excellent auditory perception, which made it

possible to carry out the phonetic transcription during the application of the questionnaire (CARDOSO, 2010).

Because ALF adopted the scientific method of investigation prescribed by linguistic geography and managed to deal with the complexity of linguistic phenomena, it became a work of reference to dialectological studies, given its contribution to the progress of language science. And, gradually, the dialectological method, initiated by Gilliéron, was improved. Other atlases began to portray ethnographic peculiarities and diastratic variations, enriching the analysis of linguistic diversity, mainly in Europe and the Americas, as evidenced by numerous publications of national and regional linguistic atlases.

### **THE LINGUISTIC ATLAS OF BRAZIL PROJECT (ALiB)**

Nelson Rossi published the first linguistic atlas of a Brazilian dialect: *Atlas Prelvio dos Falares Baianos* (APFB) (*Preliminary Atlas of Bahia dialects*), published in 1963. After APFB, other works in the field of Brazilian Geolinguistics began to be published: *Sketch of a Linguistic Atlas of Minas Gerais* (EALMG), by Ribeiro *et al.* (1977); *Linguistic Atlas of Paraíba* (ALPB), by Aragão and Menezes (1984); *Linguistic Atlas of Sergipe* (ALS) by Ferreira *et al.* (1987) and *Linguistic Atlas of Paraná* (ALPR), by Aguilera (1994).

Castilho (1972-1973) highlights the importance of the philologist Serafim da Silva Neto, who insisted that the Faculties of Philosophy<sup>3</sup> prepared dialectologists capable of conducting field research during his classes, courses and scientific meetings, “until we could, when we get more mature scientific means, undertake the task of elaborating the national atlas” (CASTILLO, 1972-1973, p. 136).

Silva Neto’s wishes began to be designed during the seminar *Paths and Perspectives for the Geolinguistics in Brazil*, held at the Federal University of Bahia in 1996, and was supported by a group of dialectologists from various regions of Brazil. On that occasion, a national committee was created, initially composed of the authors of the five published regional linguistic atlases (and one, in progress): Suzana Cardoso (UFBA), Jacyra Mota (UFBA), Maria do Socorro de Aragão (UFPB), Mário Roberto Zágari (UFJF), Walter Koch (UFRGS) and Vanderci de Andrade Aguilera (UEL); and, later on, also by: Aparecida Negri Isquerdo (UFMS), Abdelhak Razky (UFPA), Felício Wessling Margotti (UFSC) and Cléo Vilson Altenhofen (UFRGS).

Thereby, ALiB, an urban linguistic atlas, is born and its general objective is to record and describe the various Brazilian dialects, at the phonetic-phonological, semantic-lexical, morphosyntactic and pragmatic-discursive levels, adopting a standardized and detailed methodology, based on both previous geolinguistic research experiences, and the multidimensional perspective (MOTA, CARDOSO, 2009).

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<sup>3</sup> At present, the term used is faculty of Letters or faculty of Arts.

Regarding the collection of data, ALiB uses specific questionnaires, which, according to Aguilera and Figueiredo (2002, p. 10), “has ensured the scientific character needed for the research and it still makes it less complex to obtain the recording of the linguistic phenomena to be studied”. According to Silva Neto (1957, p. 19), the questionnaire offers “two advantages: (i) to make it possible to investigate methodically certain groups of designations, and therefore, to help the memory of the inquirer or the inquirers; and (ii) to be applicable to the whole territory, providing, thus, the possibility of comparing the materials”.

The ALiB Project questionnaires were elaborated according to the research objective and were structured as follows: Phonetic-Phonological Questionnaire (QFF), Semantic-Lexical Questionnaire (QSL), Morphosyntactic Questionnaire (QSM), besides pragmatic and metalinguistic questions and a text for reading.

It is worth mentioning that the QFF contains 159 questions and aims at recording variations in the pronunciation of the items, specifically searching for the term sought by the question as a response, even with phonic variations. The QSL, in turn, comprises 202 questions that aim to document the most current lexical items in the locality, in order to record the synonymic richness. Finally, in the QMS, the 49 questions have the purpose of verifying the diatopic and diastratic variants in the syntactic and morphological constructions of Brazilian Portuguese.

Among the various steps taken by the ALiB Project, it is recorded that, in October 2014, during the III International Congress of Dialectology and Sociolinguistics (III CIDS), held in Londrina, a long-awaited dream came true: the launch of the first two volumes of the Linguistic Atlas of Brazil, published by the State University of Londrina Press (EDUEL).

## **STEPS TO ELABORATION OF GEOLINGUISTIC WORKS: THE STANCE OF THE INQUIRER AND THE LINGUISTIC QUESTIONNAIRES**

In the assumption of a “dialectical mentality” (SILVA NETO, 1957), the dialectologist should pay attention to certain factors in the execution stages of a geolinguistic research. Hence, in order to put into practice an effective description of the linguistic reality of a certain region, in addition to collecting and analyzing data through a specific methodology, it is necessary to carry out a preliminary study of the regional particularities and their social segments, directing the research to the objectives that guide it.

Brandão (1991) lists other essential steps to carry out the geolinguistic work: (i) preliminary data collection; (ii) choice of localities; (iii) selection of informants; (iv) establishment of the data collection technique; (v) the inquiry and its application; (vi) the appropriate filing and transcription of data; and (vii) the preparation of linguistic maps.

Specifically, regarding the technique of data collection, Brandão (1991) reinforces the need to obtain a homogeneous material so that the linguistic facts can be compared. To do so, it is necessary to research the specificities of the region in the phase of elaboration



of the questionnaire, as well as to apply an experimental questionnaire to select the most relevant questions.

In addition, it is necessary to mention the work of the researcher, who faces the following expectations: receptivity of the communities to be studied, adequacy of the questionnaire to the cultural reality of the interviewee, a stance that is capable of ensuring an identification of the informant with the inquirer, questions that do not lead the informant and prevent him/her from imitating the inquirer's variety.

In order to do so, the documentation writer should have a linguistic training, be familiar with the subject matter of the questionnaire, have discussed with the team members better ways to get answers, know the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the research object and master the phonetic notation system. When inquiring, the researcher should establish contact with the community members, select informants according to the pre-established criteria and apply the questionnaire using a voice recorder. The researcher should also adopt a relaxed attitude, so that the interviewee feels at ease.

It should be noted that the linguistic material that serves as basis of the study of spoken language is the vernacular: spontaneous speech or enunciation in which there is minimal attention to the language. However, there is difficulty in obtaining such data for research, in view of the simulation of natural situations in interviews recorded in the presence of an inquirer, which Labov (1972) called "observer paradox."

In the interviews of the ALiB Project, the inquirers do not act as researcher-observer, but they participate directly in the interaction, allowing the attaining of certain linguistic variants from the pre-established questionnaire. In this context, as Tarallo (1999) advocates, the inquirer should minimize the effects of his/her presence and the voice recorder, assuming an "interested-apprentice" role about the peculiarities of the region, avoiding saying the word "language", so that the speaker does not modalize his speech and render the research skewed.

We also emphasize the indispensability of using a guideline questionnaire for the interview, homogenizing the data collection. Moreover, the inquirer should adapt his social and linguistic behavior to that of the group which is being interviewed and enter the community through people who are already accepted by the community, avoiding the perception of his presence as an "intruder".

Another factor mentioned by Tarallo (1999) concerns the origin of the informant who, in the case of ALiB, should be born and raised in the locality, whose parents were also born in the locality or region. Regarding representativeness, it is important to have a significant number of informants and social profiles (sex, age, schooling) which enables to constitute a universe of comprehensive sample, according to the pre-established methodology.

Regarding the collection instrument - the questionnaire - it should be noted that, in the face of the informant's abstention, the inquirer should rephrase the question according to his inventive capacity or techniques discussed at the annual meetings of the Workshop "Linguistic Atlas of Brazil" (WorkALiB) or, yet, between the members of the team. Due to

the impossibility of having a single inquirer, the National Committee of the Project ALiB decided to adopt up to 30 inquirers, who undergo test interviews that are evaluated by the scientific directors and by the Committee (SILVA, AGUILERA, 2009).

According to Kami and Aguilera (2002), the National Committee tested, in the field, several times, each version of the questionnaires, which were reformulated after discussions between the members and researchers at the team meetings. Therefore, there were the 1998 and 2001 versions which were published by EDUEL and applied by other researchers in the elaboration of state atlases. They were also adapted as support for dissertations and theses under the geolinguistic theory.

In the first meetings, the National Committee discussed thoroughly the methodology adopted in the *corpus* collecting process, and organized the fieldwork with the formulation of questions and methods to reformulate the most difficult questions to be answered, solving possible problems that could arise *in loco*.

At present, the methodology of data cartography is discussed and courses addressing various studies based on the *corpus* of the Project (study of phraseologies, elaboration of the Dialectal Dictionary, among others) are offered. Besides, the production of articles on collected variants is stimulated.

## WORLD KNOWLEDGE AND THE SUCCESS IN GEOLINGUISTIC RESEARCH

Aguilera, Amâncio and Paes (2003), carried out a study in which they highlight the importance of the experimental investigations, carried out in the initial phase of the ALiB Project (from 1998 to 2000). However, factors such as socio-cultural reality of the locality, life experience, beliefs, and traditions of the informants result in some barriers that intervene in the research and are experienced *in loco*.

These researchers also highlight the influence of social history and culture in each linguistic point investigated, given the confluence of biosocial environment in the linguistic universe employed by the speaker. Specifically, in the research regarding the answers to the QSL questions, the authors observed the difficulty in obtaining them when linked to unknown referents or not often present in the informants' daily life<sup>4</sup>.

Regarding QFF's formulations of questions, Aguilera, Amâncio and Paes (2003) emphasize that they need to occur in a clear and unambiguous manner, and that the inquirer should know the local culture to structure the question so as to evoke in the "spirit of the interlocutor" the denomination in question, avoiding parasynonyms. They also mention the insertion of a certain lexical item as an element often capable of contributing to the

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<sup>4</sup> For example: variants for *semáforo* (traffic lights) in less populated localities, variants linked to the semantic area of agro-pastoral activities in regions that are not quite familiar with the rural environment.

clarity of the question. They conclude that a variety of factors favor a non-response: vocabulary polymorphism, linguistic taboo, use of euphemisms, archaisms, and sociocultural context.

In fact, Mota (2006, p. 251) stresses that, although there is concern in making linguistic questionnaires efficient, some difficulties may arise during the interview, mainly because of the national and comprehensive character, such as the absence of the referent to which the question refers to in certain areas<sup>5</sup>. Such difficulties in obtaining the answers possibly led to reformulation attempts by the inquirer, the subject of this study.

In the field of methodology, with regard to linguistic questionnaires and to the difficulty in obtaining answers, Pontes and Aguilera (1999) demonstrate, through mock interviews, the relation between abstentions and the lack of knowledge regarding rural referents, shown in the active vocabulary of the urban speakers. The researchers concluded that the main difficulties occurred in groups of the dialectal terms related to the informant's worldview and world knowledge, lack of knowledge of some lexical items present in the formulation of the question, or questions that required complementary information or substitution of terms to eliminate ambiguity.

#### **CORPUS ANALYSIS: STRATEGIES FOR OBTAINING ANSWERS IN GEOLINGUISTIC SURVEYS**

The ALiB Project questionnaires, which make up the only data collection instrument to be applied throughout the national territory, sometimes require some adaptations in the reformulation of the questions, in order to obtain a specific response.

According to Pontes and Aguilera (1999, p. 243), what matters in the reformulation of the questions is the inquirer's experience, the consideration of regional peculiarities, the sensitivity of the team to sense the world knowledge of each informant, as well as the search for alternatives which can reduce the distance between investigator and informant in this asymmetric relation.

Consequently, we list the description and analysis of the reformulations in the interviews conducted in Midwest capitals Cuiabá-MT, Campo Grande-MS and Goiania-GO in order to subsequently examine the interviews that took place in Southeast capitals: Sao Paulo-SP, Belo Horizonte-MG, Rio de Janeiro-RJ and Vitoria-ES.

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<sup>5</sup> Mota (2006) illustrates her assertion in the following examples: *geleia* (jelly) (QSL, issue 177), in some localities of Bahia, Sergipe and Alagoas – which is reinforced by Yida (2011); *cangalha*, *canga*, *bruaca* and *mochó(a)* (QSL, questions 55, 56, 58, 78 and 79, respectively) in the urban areas, due to lack of world knowledge; *ovelha* (sheep) (QFF, question 41) in a locality where this type of breeding does not exist; in addition to *soca* (QSL, question 47) in places where there are no rice or tobacco crops.

## ***Strategies for Obtaining Answers: surveys in Midwest Capitals***

In interviews conducted in Midwest capitals, the rate of valid answers to question 054 of the QFF was very high, with only one abstention – by informant 7, from Cuiaba, male, age group II and higher education level. That informer insists that the answer would be (*bacterial*) *brucellosis* even in the retake, but he shows certain knowledge of the disease (*aftosa*) (foot-and-mouth disease) by commenting that, in fact, it is transmitted by virus. However, he does not say the variant expected for the question.

Table 2 shows the questions which were reformulated by the inquirer, in absolute numbers and percentage, in the surveys conducted in each Midwest capital in 2001, 2003, 2004 and 2005.

**Table 2:** List of reformulated questions in surveys in Midwest capitals  
(question 054 – *aftosa*- foot-and-mouth disease)

| Point        | Locality     | State | Reformulated questions |                |
|--------------|--------------|-------|------------------------|----------------|
|              |              |       | NA <sup>6</sup>        | % <sup>7</sup> |
| 108          | Cuiaba       | MT    | 3                      | 37,5           |
| 115          | Campo Grande | MS    | 4                      | 50             |
| 123          | Goiania      | GO    | 1                      | 12,5           |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |              |       | <b>8</b>               | <b>33,4%</b>   |

Source: Project ALiB data (prepared by the authors).

Out of a total of twenty-four interviews (eight per capital), eight reformulations of the initial question contained in the questionnaires (PROJECT ALiB NATIONAL COMMITTEE, 2001) were carried out by the inquirer, totaling approximately 33.4% of reformulations for the question. Specifically, per capital, in Campo Grande, there was the largest number of reformulations in the surveys in the region, with 50% of reformulations for the question in the interviews, while in Goiania, a rate of only 12.5% was recorded.

It is worth highlighting that the human occupation in this region was established with the mining and, after its decline, they started cultivating mate-herb, raising cattle and implementing family farming, according to Diégues Jr. (1980). Despite the change in the economic profile based on cattle raising and grain production for the development of industrialization in Brazil that has taken place since the beginning of the 20th century, it seems that knowledge focused on the agriculture sector in this region is solid. This is shown

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<sup>6</sup> Absolute number.

<sup>7</sup> Percentage.

in the answers of the informants and in the information used by the inquirer to reformulate question 054 of the QFF.

When analyzing the strategies employed by the inquirers in the re-elaboration of the questions, we noticed the recurrence of information based on world knowledge of political and economic factors. Such strategies focus on preventing the export of bovine meat, due to the cases of the foot-and-mouth disease in the cattle in the region, and in the precautionary measures commonly taken by the government to eradicate the disease.

In fact, in South America, foci of foot-and-mouth disease in Argentina and Uruguay in 2000 and 2001<sup>8</sup> have resurfaced, resulting in large economic losses. Due to the proximity of the border of these countries with the Midwest Region, cattle farmers needed to redouble efforts to prevent the spread of the disease. Given this data, the inquirer, aware of the informant's life story, used this information in addition to facts about the informant's childhood or turned to the life experience of people close to him.

Exemplifying this overview, we have a retake of the life experience of informant 4, from Cuiaba, who recalls her childhood and the name of the disease, told by her father. The dialogue shows the importance of the inquirer's attitude when trying to know the informant's story, retaking it during the interview as a mnemonic element:

INQ.<sup>9</sup>- When you were raised, wasn't there any cattle on the farm?

INF.- Yes, there was, my father had cattle.

INQ.- And did the cattle have this fever?

INF.- Yes, they had a fever, a yel... fever ... *fitosa*, I don't know what they called it, and the cattle also had hoof disease like this ... [...]

(Informant 4, female, group age II, elementary school – Cuiabá-MT)

In addition to life story, the reformulation also highlighted the vaccination campaigns and the economic reason of meat exports:

INQ.- And that one, since we are talking about farm, that disease that cattle have, usually around the mouth?

INF.- Around the mouth?

INQ.- That cattle have... There are those vaccination campaigns, which even hampers the export of ...

INF.- I know that, it's the ... *febre aftosa* (foot-and-mouth disease), right?

(Informant 5, male, age group I, higher education – Cuiabá-MT)

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<sup>8</sup> According to data from the *site* regarding febre aftosa (foot-and-mouth disease) in pigs and cattle: <<https://bit.ly/2G8wgKd>>. Accessed on: 19 Jun. 2017.

<sup>9</sup> The acronyms INQ and INF refer to the conversational turn-taking of the inquirer and informant respectively.

We also select the interview with informant 2, from Campo Grande, in which the inquirer refers to a televised event at that time, referring to world knowledge close to that of the informant:

INQ.- Since we are talking about farm, that disease that cattle have, around the mouth. Every once in a while, there is a vaccination campaign. Here in Mato Grosso do Sul, sometimes we watch on television that the farmers are going to ...

INF.- *Afetó, afetosa* (foot-and-mouth disease), right?

INQ.- Vaccination here and in Paraguay, right?

INF.- Yes, *afetosa* (foot-and-mouth disease).

(Informant 2, female, age group I, elementary school – Campo Grande-MS)

We observe that the fact that livestock farming and meat export have a crucial weight in the regional economy makes this information valuable as a strategy to assist the inquirer in reformulating question 054.

In the interview with informant 5, from Goiás, the inquirer creates a symmetrical relation with him. In the end, he reveals knowing the border issue and the reality of Mato Grosso do Sul in the fight against this zoonosis.

INQ.- And that disease that normally cattle have, around the mouth?

INF.- Around the mouth?

INQ.- Yes, sometimes they have it, they have fever, we even had to eradicate ...

INF.- *Febre afitosa* (Foot-and-mouth disease)?

INQ.- Eradicate it, right? To export our meat ...

INF.- *Pu*, around here it is eradicated, it is, the problem is in your State there, Mato Grosso do Sul.

INQ.- Yes, mainly ...

INF.- Border with Paraguay.

INQ.- With Paraguay that doesn't have control, right?

INF.- Yes.

(Informant 5, male, age group I, higher education – Goiania-GO)

According to the informant, the problem of foot-and-mouth disease is recurrent in the Midwest Region, mainly in Mato Grosso do Sul. The inquirer resorts to the information about the effort to eradicate this disease and the impact on exports. In fact, in a report on *Agrolink*<sup>10</sup> website, the impact of the 2005 outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Paraná and Mato Grosso do Sul exports was addressed.

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<sup>10</sup> Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2I821t4>>. Accessed on: 27 Jun. 2017.

The appeal to the economic factor is an effective strategy in the surveys conducted in the Midwest Region, in view of the importance given by the media to beef exports in relation to regional and even national financial movements. Diégues Jr. (1980: 182) corroborates this understanding, stating that “diversity of economic reason” contributes to the “regionalization of language” and reveals the “local peculiarities”. Therefore, the knowledge of the *aftosa* variant and its insertion in the active vocabulary of the speakers shows the strength of the agricultural factor as determinant of detailed knowledge.

### ***Strategies for Obtaining Answers: surveys in Southeast capitals***

In the surveys of Southeast capitals, unlike those carried out in Midwest capitals, there were some gaps in the responses, even with the reformulation attempts described above. It is worth mentioning that these interviews were carried out in 2001 (only one in Sao Paulo), 2004, 2005 and 2006, that is, after most of the interviews conducted in Midwest capitals.

The following table shows the number of reformulated questions by capital, in absolute numbers and percentage.

**Table 3:** List of reformulated questions in surveys in Southeast capitals (question 054 – *aftosa* – foot-and-mouth disease)

| Point        | Locality       | State | Reformulated Questions |              |
|--------------|----------------|-------|------------------------|--------------|
|              |                |       | NA                     | %            |
| 138          | Belo Horizonte | MG    | 5                      | 62,5         |
| 179          | Sao Paulo      | SP    | 4                      | 50           |
| 190          | Vitoria        | ES    | 5                      | 62,5         |
| 202          | Rio de Janeiro | RJ    | 5                      | 62,5         |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |                |       | <b>19</b>              | <b>59,4%</b> |

Source: Project ALiB data (prepared by the authors).

On balance, thirty-two interviews (eight per locality) were carried out, recording a total of nineteen reformulations (59.4%). In Sao Paulo, there was the need to reformulate the question in 50% of the interviews, while in Belo Horizonte, Vitoria and Rio de Janeiro<sup>11</sup>, there was a 62.5% reformulation rate for the question.

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<sup>11</sup> It was brought to our attention the surveys in Rio de Janeiro, with 50% of non-answers. In Belo Horizonte, there were two abstentions, although there was a reformulation; that was repeated in the interviews in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

According to Diégues Jr. (1980), in the 19th century, coffee cultivation contributed to the expansion of human occupation in Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais and São Paulo, entering the region where Paraná is currently located. There were major transformations with the introduction of slave labor and, later, the labor force of immigrants. In addition, the introduction of cattle raising and the advent of industrialization, boosting the great economic development of the region in the so-called urban-industrial belt, according to the author's classification. Rio de Janeiro, as capital of Brazil between 1763 and 1960, received the Royal Court in 1807, as well as investments in infrastructure by the slave traders, constituting a modern and industrial large center (FAUSTO, 2013).

In fact, some affirmations of the informants reinforce this historical-economic view of the regional formation, as they show unfamiliarity regarding the denominations belonging to the lexicon of the rural environment, for example, in the speech of informant 2, from Belo Horizonte, in the first reformulation, during the QFF<sup>12</sup>:

INQ.- There is a disease that usually cattle have, every year they have to be vaccinated. They have fever. Have you heard of this disease?

INF.- Hum...I've heard it, but I do not remember.

INQ.- It's because it's not part of our lives, is it?

INF.- No, it doesn't, that's right.

INQ.- Especially for those who live in the city, it doesn't.

INF.- mm-hmm

(Informant 2 – female, age group I, elementary school – Belo Horizonte-MG)

When examining the excerpts from interviews, we noted that the inquirers seek to recover the informants' world knowledge concerning the outbreak in Mato Grosso do Sul, reported by the media. This strategy was used in the interviews conducted in Belo Horizonte (informants 1 and 3 with retakes, but no response; informant 6 with no response; and informant 8 with response) and Vitoria (informants 5 and 6: response obtained). The excerpts from the interview with informant 8, from Belo Horizonte, and informant 6, from Vitoria, confirm the attempts to elicit responses:

INQ.- There is a disease that cattle have and every year they have to be vaccinated. It appeared on television, that fever, right? A fever that even endangered Brazil's cattle raising.

INF.- What is not working is my memory. ((laughs)) Oh, we forget a lot!

INQ.- But who would expect such a question?

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<sup>12</sup> The inquirer insisted on the question during the retake at the end of the interview and obtained the answer.



- INF.- Febre *afitosa*? (Foot-and-mouth disease?) [...]  
 (Informant 8, female, age group II, higher education – Belo Horizonte-MG)
- INF.- A disease that usually cattle have, that cattle have, in fact, it occurs around the mouth, and if one is infected, it has to be isolated, killed, otherwise it can infect the others. They have fever.
- INF.- Wow, now you got me, huh?
- INQ.- Yes. In those times cattle had it in Mato Grosso ...
- INF.- Febre aftosa? (Foot-and-mouth disease?)  
 (Informant 6, female, age group I, higher education – Vitoria-ES)

We reinforce that the interviews conducted in Belo Horizonte and Vitoria were recorded in 2006, after the great outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Mato Grosso do Sul. Therefore, when working with a large team of inquirers, it is important to realign the formulation of the questions, so that, with the sum of their experiences, the geolinguistic research enterprise becomes more productive.

In some interviews, the inquirers highlighted the intense vaccination campaign and its media coverage, as in the inquiries of informants 2 and 5, from Sao Paulo, and informants 2, 4 and 8, from Vitoria. The following excerpt shows the dialogue between the inquirer and informant 5 from Sao Paulo:

- INQ.- A disease that cattle have, usually around the mouth, they have fever, they have to be vaccinated every year?
- INF.- I don't know.
- INQ.- No? I'll be back to it later on, and maybe you've even heard of it on television, right, in the Vaccination Campaign, or, then the eradication of this disease in Brazil.
- INF.- Febre *afitosa*? (Foot-and-Mouth disease?)
- INQ.- That's right. I'm not going to mark it. I was going to mark it. I will not do it.  
 (Informant 5, male, age group I, higher education – Sao Paulo-SP)

In other interviews, the strategy used by the inquirer is to bring to mind the name given to the zoonosis in question, because of its recurrence at certain periods of the year in the news, without seeking a specific piece of news, as in the excerpts from the interviews with informants 2 and 3 (without response), 4 (with response recorded in the retake and 6 (with response obtained):

- INQ.- There is the name of a fever that cattle have and that appears like that around the mouth, do you know the name? And if you do not isolate the cattle ((unintelligible.)), there was even a time when there was a lot of talk about this kind of thing ...

INF.- Febre *afitosa*, right? (Foot-and-mouth disease, right?)

INQ.- That's right. What do you call it?

INF.- *Afitosa*. (Foot-and-mouth disease.)

(Informant 6, female, age group I, higher education – Rio de Janeiro-RJ)

Finally, another strategy used by the inquirers in the interviews in Southeast capitals is to reformulate the question so that the informant records the linguistic forms *af[i]ta* or *af[e]ta* in *afta*, since the phenomenon in question is the epenthesis of the vowel and the context is similar in both *afta* and *afitosa*. Among the examples, we list excerpts from the interviews with informant 5, from Sao Paulo, and informant 8, from Rio de Janeiro. In the first, the inquirer instigates the informant to record the form *afta*; in the second, the assistant intervenes in the interview, causing the informant to correlate the words:

INQ.- There is a disease that cattle have that makes them foam around the mouth ...

INF.- Rabies?

INQ.- Rabies occurs in dogs, right, so, but this one occurs in cattle, only in cattle and they have to be vaccinated always, there is always a campaign on television.

INF.- Oh, I do not know.

INQ.- Sometimes the meat, it can't be exported ...

INF.- That mad cow disease?

INQ.- There's that too.

INF.- There is that too, I don't know, I only know that my grandfather vaccinated them.

INQ.- He vaccinated them, that's right, that's it.

INF.- He vaccinated them, but I don't know.

INQ.- You don't know ... sometimes also around the mouth, now in people ok, painful lesions that develops in your mouth that hurt...

INF.- *Afta*. (Mouth ulcers.)

INQ.- That's right, do you have *afta* (mouth ulcers)?

INF.- I haven't had it for a while, but if I eat something sour.

INQ.- Pineapple, oww! [...]

(Informant 5, male, age group I, higher education – Sao Paulo-SP)

INQ.- The name of a disease that cattle have, usually around the mouth like that, a disease that causes fever. Usually we say *fever* and the name of that fever. There are times when much is said about it. INF.- That's right ... There is ... The word does not come to mind, but it's very ((unintelligible)).

INQ.- You must know, because you listen to everything.

INF.- That's right ... There is, there is, yes.

INQ.- You should know if it's the time or not. All right, there are some things that we can get back to.

AUX.<sup>13</sup>- It even reminds us of what we have in our mouth sometimes ...

INF.- *Aftosa?* (Foot-and-mouth disease?)

INQ.- Ah ... That's right! Does it have anything to do with it?

INF.- No, I think it has something to do with food.

INQ.- Does it?

INF.- Yes.

(Informant 8, female, age group II, higher education – Rio de Janeiro-RJ)

In the transcribed excerpt from the interview of informant 8, from Rio de Janeiro, the inquirer suggests again, in addition to the first formulation, the expression “fever”, to bring to the informant's memory the other word that is usually amalgamated to it, by juxtaposition, forming, in this case, /*febriaftosa*/.

According to Pontes and Aguilera (1999), in the experimental investigations, difficulties in the registration of the linguistic form *afta* by the speakers were detected, due to the possibility of being replaced by another regional variant, mainly by individuals from rural areas: “Question 48, ‘What is the name of what appears in the mouth of people, in here [to show] that hurts, bothers?’ did not elicit the answer ‘afta’, because in rural areas there are other denominations such as *boqueira*, wound for *afta*” (PONTES, AGUILERA, 1999, p 242). Given this experience, we concluded that it is better not to accept the variant *afta* whose stress is on the initial syllable whereas in *aftosa* the stress is on the second syllable, which could also skew the analysis.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

In light of the foregoing and considering that the ALiB questionnaires are the same data collection instrument to be applied throughout Brazil, we conclude that some adjustments are necessary in the reformulation of the questions that seek specific answers.

In an overview, for the success in geolinguistic surveys, what matters is the world knowledge, concerning both the inquirer - in relation to the historical-economic-social reality of the locality under study -, and the informant - that can mention the variant as part of his active vocabulary. It should be acknowledged, therefore, that the informant is sometimes not able to recall the variant inscribed in the *caput* of the question because it is not inserted in the lexical framework of his daily life.

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<sup>13</sup> The acronym AUX refers to the conversational turn-taking of the inquirer's assistant. The ALiB Project Committee recommends that the project's interviews be conducted by an inquirer and an assistant.

In the case of foot-and-mouth disease, in view of its impact on the export balance of beef portrayed by the media, the citation, by the inquirer, of the information reported about it is an important scheme to obtain that answer.

In addition, the inquirer's conduct to establish a symmetrical relation with the informant is imperative, showing interest in his life experience and life story, and using this information as mnemonic strategies to bring to mind the required variant.

Unlike other QFF questions, question 054 (*aftosa*) does not trigger the registration of parasyonyms by the informant, as Aguilera and Yida (2008) warned. The fact that it is a variant linked to countryside life and is related to a health problem dealt with in the Midwest of the Country may have contributed to have it obtained more easily by the speakers of that region. Differently, in the interviews carried out in the Southeast Region, there were more reformulations of the question, probably because it is a specific term of agriculture, which does not belong to the informant's daily life vocabulary, as Pontes and Aguilera (1999) emphasized.

In a large group of inquirers, therefore, it is significant to exchange experiences in order to improve the *modus faciendi* of the research, accomplishing a cohesive and successful work. Nevertheless, adjustments can always be made at the moment of the interview *in loco*, during the collection of empirical data. Either way, according to Gillierón, the ideal questionnaire is only achieved at the end of the whole research: "Le questionnaire pour être sensiblement meilleur, aurait dû être fait après l'enquête" (POP, 1950, p. 120).

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