Passives and Se Constructions

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1. Introduction
In this chapter we discuss some of the main properties of constructions involving participial passives, passive *se*, and impersonal *se* in Portuguese, focusing on its two main varieties, European and Brazilian Portuguese (henceforth EP and BP, respectively).1 When the two dialects differ, we will provide the relevant judgments each dialect assigns to the data under discussion by using the abbreviations EP and BP.

The chapter is organized in five sections. Section 2 deals with participial passives, distinguishing between adjectival and verbal passives and between the participial forms of passives and compound tenses. Section 3 focuses on passive *se* and impersonal *se* constructions, comparing them with verbal passives when appropriate. Section 4 concludes the paper.

2. Participial passive constructions
Like what one finds in many languages, passive constructions in Portuguese involve a reorganization of the argument structure of transitive verbs2 associated with some specific morphology, which has several consequences for syntactic computations. Take the transitive verb *plantar* ‘plant’, for instance. In an active construction such as (1a) below, for example, its external argument is realized as the syntactic subject, bearing nominative Case and triggering verbal agreement, whereas the internal argument is realized as the syntactic object, bearing accusative Case. In turn, in the passive version of (1a) given in (1b), the external argument is realized as an adjunct-like PP and the internal argument is the element that bears nominative Case and triggers verbal agreement with an auxiliary verb (*ser* ‘be’). The passive form is obtained by adding participial morphology to the verb and the participial form also agrees with the internal argument.

(1) a. Eu **plantei** as flores.
   I **planted**1SG the flowers
   ‘I planted the flowers.’

   b. As **flores** foram **plantada** por mim.
   the flowers.FEM.PL were **PLANTPP** by me
   ‘The flowers were planted by my.’

Each of the ingredients of passive constructions mentioned above independently interacts with other parts of the grammar. Consider the participial morphology, for instance. Besides

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1 A discussion of other *se*-constructions (reflexive/reciprocal structures, middles, and anticausatives, for instance) falls outside the scope of this chapter.
2 As opposed to languages like German, for instance, which allows passives of unergative verbs, as illustrated in (i), this is not a possibility in Portuguese, as shown in (ii).

(i) Es wurde getanzt. *(German, Jaeggli 1986)*
   *it was danced*
   ‘There was dancing.’

(ii) *Foi dançado. *(Portuguese)*
    *was danced*
   ‘There was dancing.’
being associated with passives, as seen in (1b), it may also encode perfectivity, as shown in (2a) below. (2b) further shows that the two uses of the participial morphology may in fact be found in the same clause. One difference between them, though, is that the passive participle may bear agreement morphology, as seen in (1b), but not the perfective participial, as seen in (2a), which displays default morphology (masculine singular). Thus, in the perfective passive in (2b), the perfective participle has default morphology, whereas the passive participle agrees in gender and number with the internal argument.

(2) a. A Maria tinha contrata-d-o as funcionárias.
the Maria had hire-PPLE-MASC.SG the employees.FEM.PL
‘Maria had hired the employees.’
b. As funcionários tinham si-d-o contratad-a-s pela Maria.
the employees.FEM.PL had been-PPLE-MASC.SG hire-PPLE-FEM-PL by.the Maria
‘The employees had been hired by Maria.’

These two uses of the participle interact with clitic placement in an interesting way in the varieties of Portuguese analyzed here, as illustrated in (3) and (4):³

(3) a. *O João tinha enviado-me as revistas. (EP/BP: *)
the João had sent-me the magazines
b. O João tinha, com toda a certeza, me enviado as revistas. (EP: *; BP: OK)
the João had with all the certainty me sent the magazines
c. O João tinha-me, com toda a certeza, enviado as revistas. (EP: OK; BP: *)
the João had-me with all the certainty sent the magazines
‘João had,( for sure,) sent me the magazines.’

(4) a. *As revistas foram enviadas-me pelo João. (EP/BP: *)
the magazines were sent-me by-the João
b. *As revistas foram, com toda a certeza, me enviadas pelo João. (EP/BP: *)
the magazines were with all the certainty me sent by-the João
c. As revistas foram-me, com toda a certeza, enviadas pelo João. (EP: OK; BP:*)
the magazines were-me with all the certainty sent by-the João
d. As revistas me foram enviadas pelo João. (EP: *; BP: OK)
the magazines me were sent by-the João
‘The magazines were,(for sure,) sent to me by João.’

Let us first consider BP, which is essentially a proclitic system (but see section 3.2 below for further discussion). Thus, the ungrammaticality of the sentences in (3a,c) and (4a,c) in this dialect directly follows from its general ban on enclisis. What about the contrast between (3b) and (4b), both involving proclisis to the participial form? A very plausible explanation is that the agreement in gender and number in the case of the passive participle in (4b) renders it close to adjectives and independently, an adjective cannot be a target for clitic attachment in either dialect, as illustrated in (5), where the clitic is an argument of the adjective.⁴

³ Orthographic conventions dictate that there must be a hyphen between a clitic and the verb it attaches to in cases of enclisis, but not in cases of proclisis. In order to make the syntactic attachment visually clearer in cases where the clitic is sandwiched between two verbs, as in (3b,c) and (4b-c), for instance, some parenthetical material was added.

⁴ Participles may display irregular short forms in tandem with regular forms, as illustrated in (i) below. Significantly, passives require the short forms, which are more prone to be diachronically reanalyzed as adjectives; by contrast, perfective compound tenses require the regular (longer) forms.
(5) a. *Eles foram, sem dúvida alguma, fiéis-me.
   they were without doubt some faithful-me
   (EP/BP: *)

b. *Eles foram, sem dúvida alguma, me fiéis.
   they were without doubt some me faithful
   (EP/BP: *)

c. Eles foram-me, sem dúvida alguma, fiéis.
   they were-me without doubt some faithful
   (EP: OK; BP: *)

d. Eles me foram, sem dúvida alguma, fiéis.
   they me were without doubt some faithful
   ‘Undoubtedly, they were faithful to me.’

As for EP, it is essentially an enclitic system, but proclisis must be enforced in the presence of certain specific syntactic triggers such as negation or focus, for instance. Thus, the unacceptability of (3b) and (4b) in this dialect falls under its general ban on proclisis to a nonfinite verb, whereas the unacceptability of (4d) is related to the lack of a proclisis trigger. Crucially, the ungrammaticality of (4a) may have the same source as the one seen in BP for (4b), namely, the presence of adjectival agreement morphology (gender and number) on the passive participle blocks clitic attachment.

The connection between passive participles and adjectives has further implications. As mentioned above, the auxiliary employed with passives is *ser. Interestingly, superficially similar participial constructions may resort to aspectual verbs like *estar ‘be’ (stative) or *ficar ‘remain/become’, as illustrated in (6).

(6) a. As obras de arte foram destruídas (por vândalos).
   the works of art were destroyed by vandals)
   ‘The artworks were destroyed by vandals.’

b. As obras de arte estavam/ficaram destruídas (*por vândalos).
   the works of art were.STATIVE/became destroyed by vandals
   ‘The artworks laid/became damaged (*by vandals).’

The participial form in (6b) is felt as passive in the sense that it says something about the internal argument. However, the external argument, which is optional in the case of a canonical passive and is realized as a PP (see (6a)), is not allowed in the case of the seemingly passive in (6b) with either of the aspectual verbs.

(i) a. O homicida foi preso/*prendido.
   the murderer was arrested/arrested
   ‘The murderer was arrested.’

b. A polícia tinha prendido/*preso o homicida.
   the police had arrested/arrested the murderer
   ‘The police had arrested the murderer.’

5 Once these sentences are independently explained away, the ungrammaticality of (3a) then shows that EP does not allow enclisis to a participle, regardless of whether or not it bears agreement morphology. It remains to be explained why a perfective participle may license proclisis (in a proclitic system; see (3b)), but not enclisis (in an enclitic system; see (3a)). In fact, when a proclisis trigger, like negation in (i) below, comes into play, procliticization to the participle becomes available also in EP:

(i) Eles têm sistematicamente não me informado. (EP)
   they have systematically not me informed
   ‘They have systematically kept information unknown to me.’
The contrast between (6a) and (6b) is reminiscent of Wasow’s (1977) classical distinction between verbal and adjectival passives. For Wasow, verbal passives are formed in the syntactic component, whereas adjectival passives are formed in the lexicon. Thus, while the former are pretty much regular, the latter include a considerable degree of idiosyncrasy, which is commonly found associated with specific lexical items. Take the realization of the external argument, for instance. If a verb allows a verbal passive, the external argument will always be optional and always introduced by the preposition *por ‘by’ (see (1b)) or its allomorph *per when contracted with a definite article (see (2b)). Adjectival passives, on the other hand, display a much diversified pattern, depending on the specific lexical items involved. Thus, the realization of the external argument is impossible with the adjectival passive of destruir ‘destroy’, as seen in (6b), but is obligatory in BP with the adjectival passive of compor ‘compate’, as illustrated in (7) below. The preposition introducing the element that may correspond to the external argument in an active construction may also vary. The lexical passive of cercar ‘surround’, for instance, allows both the preposition *por/per and de ‘of’, as illustrated in (8b). There are also cases like (9), which shows that the verb entristecer ‘sadden’, like many psych-verbs, does not allow a verbal passive (see (9b)), but admits an adjectival passive (see (9c)). Interestingly, the external argument is realized with the preposition com ‘with’, which is the same preposition that occurs with the adjective triste ‘sad’ (see (9d)).

(7) Este trabalho está composto *(por quatro seções). (BP)
This work is STATIVE composed by four sections.
‘This work is comprised of four sections.’

(8) a. Os soldados foram cercados por/de inimigos.
the soldiers were surrounded by/of enemies
‘The soldiers were surrounded by the enemy.’

b. A cidade estava cercada por/de montanhas.
the city was STATIVE surrounded by/of mountains.

(9) a. Os boatos entristeceram a Maria.
the rumors saddened the Maria
‘The rumors saddened Maria.’

b. *A Maria foi entristecida (pelos boatos).
the Maria was saddened (by. the rumors)
‘Maria was saddened by the rumors.’

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6 See also, among others, Levin and Rappaport 1986. On the distinction between two types of adjectival passives, namely, resultatives (with auxiliary ficar ‘stay’) and statives (with auxiliaries ser/estar ‘be’), see e.g. Embick 2004, Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 2008, Duarte and Oliveira 2010, and Duarte 2013.

7 Verbal passives are typically formed with eventive verbs and exclude different types of stative transitive verbs, as illustrated in (i) below (from Duarte 2013).

(i) a. *A melhor nota da turma foi tida pelo João.
the best grade of the class was had by the João
‘João had the best grade in the class.’

b. *Esses terrenos eram possuídos por um alemão.
these lots were owned by a German
‘These lots were owned by a German.’

c. *Cinquenta quilos eram pesados por mim no ano passado.
fifty kilos were weighted by me in the year past
‘Last year I was fifty kilos.’
c. A Maria estava/ficou entristecida (com os boatos)  
the Maria was.STATIVE/became saddened with the rumors  
‘Maria was/became saddened with the rumors.’

d. A Maria estava/ficou triste (com os boatos)  
the Maria was.STATIVE/became sad with the rumors  
‘Maria was/became sad with the rumors.’

Focusing now on verbal passives, we have seen that despite being verbal, their agreement morphology (gender and number) makes them similar to adjectival predicates with respect to clitic placement (see (4a,b) and (5a,b)). In fact, the similarities also involve the realization of the agreement morphology itself. This point is better seen in BP, which has been undergoing a weakening of its verbal and nominal agreement paradigms and displays a considerable degree of idiolectal variation in the realization of gender and number, subject to many interfering factors. Roughly speaking, BP differs from EP in that (for some speakers) passive constructions may allow lack of number agreement with preverbal subjects, as shown in (10), and lack of both gender and number agreement with postverbal subjects, as shown in (11).

![Notes](https://example.com/note.png)

8 See Simioni 2011 for relevant discussion.

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(10) a. [Os [projeto] foram arquivado.  
the.MASC.PL project.MASC were filed.MASC  
‘The projects were filed.’

b. [As [proposta] foram aprovada.  
the.FEM.PL proposal.FEM were approved.FEM  
‘The proposals were approved.’

(11) a. Foi dito muitas coisa ofensiva.  
was said.MASC many.FEM.PL thing.FEM offensive.FEM  
‘Many offensive things were said.’

b. Não foi encontrado as revista que ele pediu.  
not was found.MASC the.FEM.PL magazine.FEM that he asked  
‘The magazines that he asked for were not found.’

The data in (10) and (11) display the same pattern independently found with adjectival predicates in BP, as illustrated in (12) and (13).

(12) a. Os cavalo ficaram calmo.  
the.MASC.PL horse.MASC became calm.MASC  
‘The horses became calm.’

b. As menina estavam muito cansada.  
the.FEM.PL girl.FEM were very tired.FEM  
‘The girls were very tired.’

(13) a. Eu achei complicado as proposta apresentada.  
I found complicated.MASC the.FEM.PL proposal.FEM presented.FEM  
‘I found the proposals that were presented difficult to understand.’

b. O João considerou inadequado as medida tomada.  
the João considered inadequate.MASC the.FEM.PL measure.FEM taken.FEM  
‘João considered the measures taken to be inadequate’
The Case properties of verbal passives are in turn more transparent in EP, for in BP there are too many independent confounding properties such as the loss of third person accusative clitics, homophony between nominative and accusative third person weak and strong pronouns, and the general weakening of agreement morphology just seen above. So, we will, accordingly, focus on EP data. The data in (14) below show that the internal argument of a verbal passive cannot be marked with accusative Case (see (14b-c)), displaying nominative Case, instead (see (14d-e)).

(14) \[ E:\]
   a. Foram plantadas as flores.
      'The flowers have been planted.'
   b. *Foram plantadas-as.
      were-3.FEM.PL.ACC planted
   c. *Foram-nas plantadas.
      were-3.FEM.PL.ACC planted
      'They have been planted.'
   d. Elas foram plantadas, mas morreram.
      3.FEM.PL.NOM were planted but died
      'They were planted but didn’t last.'
   e. Fomos vistos tu e eu a arrancar as flores.
      were.1.PL seen 2.SG.NOM and 1.SG.NOM to pluck the flowers
      'You and I were seen plucking the flowers.'

Notice that the ungrammaticality of (14b) cannot be simply due to the impossibility of enclisis to a passive in EP, as seen in (4a). Recall that if the (dative) clitic of (4a) undergoes climbing and attaches to the auxiliary verb, we obtain a grammatical output, as seen in (4c). However, as shown in (14c), clitic climbing does not rescue the grammatical failure in (14b), indicating that we are indeed dealing with a Case issue.

Given the ungrammaticality of (14b) and (14c), on the one hand, and the availability of (14d-e) with nominative pronouns and the corresponding verbal agreement, on the other, the logical conclusion is that the internal argument in (14a) bears nominative Case.

3. Se constructions
In section 3.1 below we will compare the two types of se constructions commonly referred to as passive se and impersonal se constructions. The latter is available in both BP and EP, while the former was lost in the course of time in BP. We will also contrast se passives and verbal passives and consider differences between BP and EP with respect to impersonal se. In section 3.2, we will describe some peculiarities of impersonal se structures regarding clitic placement and some co-occurrence restrictions with respect to other clitics.

3.1. Passive se and impersonal se: agreement, word order, Case, and interpretation
Like other Romance languages, Portuguese may form impersonal constructions with a clitic that is homophonous to the third person reflexive clitic (se in this case). When transitive verbs are involved and the internal argument is a third person plural element, the verb may agree with the internal argument or surface with (default) third person singular morphology,
as illustrated in (15) below.\(^9\) Despite their close similarity in form and meaning, these constructions exhibit strikingly different properties, as we will see below. The agreement with the internal argument in (15a) brings this type closer to passive constructions and accordingly, its clitic is commonly referred to as passive se, as opposed to the clitic in the nonagreeing construction, generally referred to as impersonal se. For purposes of exposition, we will adopt this terminology in what follows.

\[(15)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. Ouviram-se muitas explosões ontem.} & \quad \text{(EP: OK; BP: *)} \\
\text{heard.3PL-SE many explosions yesterday} & \quad \text{‘Many explosions were heard yesterday.’} \\
\text{b. Ouviu-se muitas explosões ontem.} & \quad \text{(EP/BP: OK)} \\
\text{heard.3SG-SE many explosions yesterday} & \quad \text{‘People heard many explosions yesterday.’}
\end{align*}
\]

Diachronically, the passive se construction is the older construction, which suggests that the impersonal se construction emerged as a reanalysis of the previously existing passive se construction (see e.g. Naro 1976, Nunes 1990, 1991). In EP the two constructions are stable in the system, whereas in BP the impersonal se construction has completely replaced the passive se construction. The surviving (infrequent) instances of passive se in present-day BP are generally restricted to written language and formal style and are arguably due to a prescriptivist tradition that condemns the use of impersonal se with transitive verbs (see e.g. Galves 1986, Nunes 1990, 1991). Significantly, BP speakers have no judgments on the contrasts between the two constructions that are reported below. Thus, the discussion of the differences between passive se and impersonal se will concentrate on EP.

Besides exhibiting agreement with the internal argument, passive se constructions also pattern like standard verbal passives and unlike impersonal se constructions in several properties. First, in passive se constructions, the internal argument can move to the subject position, as exemplified in (16a) to be contrasted with (16b).\(^10\)

\[(16)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. Os bolos \underline{comeram-se} ontem.} & \quad \text{(EP)} \\
\text{the cookies ate.3PL-SE yesterday} & \quad \text{‘The cookies were eaten yesterday.’} \\
\text{b. Os bolos \underline{comeu-se} ontem.} & \quad \text{(EP)} \\
\text{the cookies ate.3SG-SE yesterday} & \quad \text{‘Someone ate the cookies yesterday.’}
\end{align*}
\]

Second, like verbal passives (see (14)) and unlike impersonal se constructions, passive se constructions do not allow accusative Case to be assigned to the internal argument. Before we examine the relevant data, we should first observe that there is an independent adjacency

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\(^{10}\) The impersonal se construction in (16b) may in fact be judged as acceptable with a marked intonation, conventionally represented by a comma, as shown in (i). The non-neutral informational status of the internal argument in these cases indicates that it moves not to the subject position, but to a higher A’-position in the left periphery. Crucially, the passive se construction in (16a) does not require any special intonation in order to be licensed.

\[(i)\]
\[
\text{Os bolos, \underline{comeu-se} ontem.} \\
\text{the cookies ate.3SG-SE yesterday} \\
\text{‘Someone ate THE COOKIES yesterday.’}
\]
restriction in EP ruling out a clitic se followed by an accusative clitic, as shown in (17) below with reflexive se. Hence, for many speakers, neither passive se nor impersonal se is compatible with an accusative clitic, as illustrated in (18).

(17) *O João deu-se-o  
the João gave-SE-it.MASC.ACC  
‘The João gave it to himself.’

(18) a. *Compraram-se-os ontem.  
bought.3PL-SE-them.MASC.ACC yesterday  
‘They were bought yesterday.’

b %Comprou-se-os ontem.  
bought.3SG-SE-them.MASC.ACC yesterday  
‘People/we bought them yesterday.’

However, it should be noted that whereas there are speakers who allow (18b) (including the first author of this paper), there are no speakers who accept (18a).11 And, crucially, when the adjacency restriction is circumvented by placing each clitic on a different host, as in (19) below, all speakers agree with respect to the contrast. Similarly, the contrast also becomes clear if a dative clitic intervenes between se and the accusative clitic, as in (20) (from Martins 2013). This shows that only impersonal se constructions allow the internal argument to be assigned accusative Case.

can.3PL-SE buy-them.MASC.ACC tomorrow  
‘They can be bought tomorrow.’

b. Pode-se comprá-los amanhã.  
can.3SG-SE buy-them.MASC.ACC tomorrow  
‘One/we can buy them tomorrow.’

(20) a. *Histórias de lobisomens, ouviam-se-lhas vezes sem conta.  
stories of werewolves heard.3PL-SE-DAT.them.FEM.ACC times without count  
‘Werewolf stories could be heard from him again and again.’

b. Histórias de lobisomens, ouvia-se-lhas vezes sem conta.  
stories of werewolves heard.3SG-SE-DAT.them.FEM.ACC times without count  
‘Werewolf stories, you could hear them from him again and again.’

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11 Sentences like (18b) are attested in the dialectal corpus CORDIAL-SIN, as illustrated below. Unfortunately, all the examples in the corpus display a third person singular accusative clitic.
The ungrammaticality of (18a), (19a) and (20a) may be taken to show that passive se behaves like the participial passive morphology in that it deactivates the verb’s accusative Case assigning property (see (14)).12 As for impersonal se, we find the converse situation: it checks the nominative Case available in the clause. Consider the data in (21), for instance.

(21) [Context: After a fire in the zoo, the animal keepers are checking on the animals and find the snakes unharmed]

a. Como se salvaram elas? [pointing to the snakes] (EP)
   how SE saved.3PL 3.FEM.PL.NOM
   ‘How were they saved?’ or ‘How did they save themselves?’

b. *Como se puderam salvá-las? [pointing to the snakes] (EP)
   how SE could.3PL save 3.FEM.PL.ACC
   ‘How was it possible to save them?’/‘How did they manage to save themselves?’

c. Como se pôde salvá-las? [pointing to the snakes] (EP)
   how SE could.3SG save 3.FEM.PL.ACC
   ‘How was it possible to save them?’ but not ‘How did they manage to save themselves?’

d. *Como se salvou elas? [pointing to the snakes] (EP)
   how SE saved.3SG 3.FEM.PL.NOM
   ‘How did one saved them?’/‘How did they save themselves?’

(21a) is ambiguous between a passive se interpretation and a reflexive reading. This ambiguity is partially due to the Case specification of the pronoun elas ‘they.FEM’. As a nominative pronoun, it may be the internal argument in a passive se structure – as accusative Case is unavailable in this type of structure – or the external argument in a reflexive structure, with the reflexive bearing the internal 0-role and accusative Case. Accordingly, a sentence like (21b) leads to ungrammaticality regardless of the interpretation: under the passive se structure, there is no licenser for the accusative Case specification of the clitic as ‘them.FEM’ and under the reflexive structure, the two clitics would be competing for the same Case licensing. In turn, (21c) is grammatical, but only under the impersonal se interpretation, with se bearing nominative and the object clitic, accusative; again, the reflexive reading is excluded as the two clitics would be competing for accusative Case. Finally, (21d) disallows the reflexive reading – because the putative subject (the pronoun elas) fails to trigger verbal agreement – and the impersonal se reading, as the two clitics compete for nominative Case.13

So far, we have seen that verbal passives and se passives share some properties. But there are also differences between them. For example, passive se constructions pattern like monoargumental un accusative sentences and unlike verbal passives in that they easily allow postverbal definite subjects in out-of-the-blue (broad information focus) sentences, as shown in (22).

(22) a. Apanharam-se estas maçãs todas sem estarem maduras. (EP)
   picked.3PL-SE these apples all without be.INF.3.PL ripe
   ‘All these apples were picked while still green.’

b. Caíram estas maçãs todas sem estarem maduras. (EP)
   fell these apples all without be.INF.3.PL ripe
   ‘All these apples fell off while still green.’

12 See e.g. Jaeggli 1986 and Baker, Johnson and Roberts 1989.
13 (21d) is grammatical in BP under an impersonal reading due to the fact that elas may check accusative with the verb, as it is a syncretic form for nominative, accusative, dative, and oblique (Similar considerations apply to the other third person weak pronouns in BP).
c. *?Foram apanhadas estas maçãs todas sem estarem maduras. (EP)
   were picked these apples all without be.INF.3.PL ripe
   ‘All these apples were picked while still green.’

There are also differences with respect to the landing site for the movement of the internal argument. Both passive se and verbal passive constructions allow movement of the internal argument to a preverbal position, as shown in (23), with no need of a marked intonation (see footnote 10).

(23) a. Estas maçãs todas apanharam-se sem estarem maduras. (EP)
   these apples all picked.3PL-SE without be.INF.3.PL ripe
   ‘The apples were picked while still green.’

b. Estas maçãs todas foram apanhadas sem estarem maduras. (EP)
   these apples all were picked without be.INF.3.PL ripe
   ‘The apples were picked while still green.’

However, as proposed by Raposo and Uriagereka (1996), the preverbal DP of a passive se sentence like (23a) seems to occupy a topic position rather than the canonical subject position, for the passive se reading is blocked when there is no available topic position, as in the inflected infinitival clause in (24), for example (from Raposo and Uriagereka 1996).

   will be difficult the documents be.INF.3PL accepted
   ‘It will be difficult for the documents to be accepted.’

   will be difficult the documents accept.INF.3PL-SE
   ‘It will be difficult for someone or other to accept the documents’

But the most salient difference between verbal passives and passive se constructions is that the external argument may be optionally expressed by means of a PP (the “by-phrase”) in the case of verbal passives, but not in the case of se passives, as illustrated in (25).

(25) a. Os bolos foram comidos (pelos meninos).
   the cookies were eaten (by-the children)
   ‘The cookies were eaten (by the children).’

b. Comeram-se os bolos (*pelos meninos). (EP)
   ate.3PL-SE the cookies (*by-the children)
   ‘The cookies ate.3PL-SE (*by-the children)
   c. Os bolos comeram-se (*pelos meninos). (EP)
      the cookies ate.3PL-SE (*by-the children)
      ‘The cookies were eaten (*by the children).’

The lack of an overtly expressed external argument also leads to different interpretations. A passive sentence such as (26a) below is compatible with both a [+hum] or a [-hum] interpretation for the implicit external argument; that is, the houses may have been destroyed, say, by their owners or by the rain. By contrast, passive se constructions only allow a [+hum] interpretation for their external argument; thus, (26b) cannot be employed to describe the destruction of the houses by the rain, for example.

(26) a. As casas foram destruídas.
   the houses were destroyed
   ‘The houses have been destroyed.’

b. Destruíram-se as casas. (EP)
   destroyed.3PL-SE the houses
   ‘The houses have been destroyed.’
The impersonal *se* construction has inherited this restriction from the passive *se* construction. So, the sentence in (27) can only be interpreted as involving an indefinite [+hum] subject, which may or may not include the speaker.

(27) Destriu-se as casas.
    destroyed:3SG-SE the houses
    ‘People/we destroyed the houses.’

Interestingly, in some dialects of EP the impersonal clitic *se* can be doubled by a strong nominative pronoun, as illustrated in (28) below (see Martins 2009). In (28a) and (28b), a *gente* (lit. ‘the people’), which was grammaticalized as a first person plural pronoun, and nós ‘we’ set an inclusive reading for *se*, whereas eles ‘they’ in (28c) sets an exclusive reading.

(28) %EP:
   a. Chama-se-lhe a gente espigas. (CORDIAL-SIN. AAL)
      call:3SG-SE-it.DAT the people spikes
      ‘We call it spikes.’
   b. Há várias qualidades que até ainda nós não se conhecemos. (CORDIAL-SIN. ALV)
      has several qualities that even still we not SE know:1PL
      ‘There are so many species (of fish) that even we (fishermen) do not know all of them yet.’
   c. Sei é de real certeza que isto era com o que se eles batiam o centeio.
      know:1SG is of real certainty that this was with what SE they beat:3PL the rye
      ‘What I know for sure is that this was the thing that people used to husk the rye.’ (CORDIAL-SIN. FLF)

The discussion above suggests that *se* is to be analyzed as a syntactic subject in impersonal *se* constructions, but not in passive *se* constructions. Arguably related to this distinction is the fact that only impersonal *se* licenses a subject-oriented secondary predicate, as illustrated in (29):

(29) a. *Cria-se avestruzes despreocupado.* (EP)
    raise:3PL-SE ostriches unpreoccupied
    ‘One raises ostriches unconcerned.’
   b. Cria-se avestruzes despreocupado. (EP)
    raise:3SG-SE ostriches unpreoccupied
    ‘One raises ostriches unconcerned.’

Given that verbal passives do not require the expression of the external argument, that passive *se* constructions excludes it, and that impersonal *se* is a ([+hum]) indefinite subject, it is not difficult to find cases in EP where the three constructions are so similar in meaning that they may be used as optimal paraphrases of one another. This is illustrated by the sentences in (30), for instance.

(30) a. Foram encontrados finalmente os destroços do avião. (EP)
    were found finally the remains of the plane
    ‘The wreckage of the plane was finally found.’
   b. Encontraram-se finalmente os destroços do avião. (EP)
    found:3PL-SE finally the remains of the plane
    ‘The wreckage of the plane was finally found.’
c. Encontrou-se finalmente os destroços do avião.
    (EP)
    ‘One finally found the wreckage of the plane.’

In face of this general interchangeability, an intriguing contrast arises in EP when the three constructions are embedded under raising and control verbs. Take the data in (31) and (32) below, for example.14 While all the sentences with the (modal) raising verb dever ‘ought’ in (31) may alternate as good paraphrases of one another, the superficially parallel sentences in (32) with the control verb querer ‘want’ show interpretive differences depending on the type of passive construction (i.e. participial passive vs. se passive).

(31)  
   a. Deve-se encontrar os culpados.
       ought.3SG-SE find the culprits
       ‘One ought to find the culprits.’
   b. Devem encontrar-se os culpados.
       ought.3PL find-SE the culprits
   c. Devem-se encontrar os culpados.
       ought.3PL-SE find the culprits
   d. Devem ser encontrados os culpados.
       ought.3PL be found the culprits
   e. Os culpados devem ser encontrados.
       the culprits ought.3PL be found
       ‘The culprits ought to be found.’

(32)  
   a. Quer-se encontrar os culpados.
       want.3SG-SE find the culprits
   b. Querem encontrar-se os culpados.
       want.3PL find-SE the culprits
   c. Querem-se encontrar os culpados.
       want.3PL-SE find the culprits
       ‘One wants to find the culprits’
   d. *Querem ser encontrados os culpados.
       want.3PL be found the culprits
       [No available interpretation]
   e. Os culpados querem ser encontrados.
       the culprits want.3PL be found
       ‘The culprits want to be found.’

The contrast between (31) and (32) can be accounted for once one takes into account the thematic properties of the embedding verb (dever ‘ought’ does not assign an external 0-role, but querer ‘want’ does) and the restructuring possibilities within the embedded clause. The agreement between querer and the plural DP in (32b) and the possibility of clitic climbing in (32c) indicate that querer, like dever in (31), can be a restructuring verb in EP and its infinitival complement is compatible with restructuring.15 As restructuring creates a verbal

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14 (31b) and (32b) also allow an irrelevant reflexive reading if the DP os culpados ‘the culprits’ has narrow focus.
15 For relevant discussion, see e.g. Gonçalves 1999 and Wurmbrand 2001.
complex whose Case and θ-assignment are defined by the embedded verb, the verbal complex of (32b) and (32c) pattern like the embedded verb of (32a), rendering them very close in meaning. Hence, (32a-c) replicates the paraphrase possibilities found in (31a-c). By contrast, the ungrammaticality of (32d) shows that the passive participle resist restructuring. Thus, the sentence in (32e) requires a biclausal analysis, with the plural DP being the external argument of querer, and it cannot be a paraphrase of (32a-c), for the external argument is now referentially definite. The paradigm in (32) is interesting in that it shows that the passive se construction may, in some environments, pattern with the impersonal se construction and differently from the participial passive.

Once impersonal se emerged out of a reanalysis of the passive se constructions as a syntactic subject, it ceased to be restricted to transitive verbs and came to be used with any type of verb, as illustrated in (33) below. However, as pointed out by Martins and Nunes (2005), the acceptability of impersonal se with specific raising verbs is subject to variation among EP speakers and is even more restricted in BP (see Nunes 1990, 1991). The sentence in (33f), for instance is allowed in EP, but not in BP.

(33)  
a. **Transitive verbs with prepositional complements:**
   - **Precisa-se** de funcionários.  
     need.3SG-SE of waiters
     ‘Waiters wanted.’
   
b. **Unergative verbs:**
   - **Trabalha-se** muito nesta cidade.  
     work.3SG-SE much in-this city
     ‘One works a lot in this city.’
   
c. **Unaccusative verbs:**
   - **Chegava-se** cedo ao trabalho.  
     arrived.3SG-SE early at-the work
     ‘One used to arrive early at work.’
   
d. **Passive verbs:**
   - Quando **se é promovido**, as coisas ficam mais fáceis.  
     when SE is promoted the things become more easy
     ‘When one is promoted, things become easier.’
   
e. **Copular verbs:**
   - Não **se ficou** contente com a nova situação.  
     not SE became.3SG happy with the new situation
     ‘People did not become happy with the new situation.’
   
f. **Raising verbs:**
   - Parecia-se ir ganhar o jogo.  
     seemed-SE go win the game
     ‘It seemed that we would win the game.’
   
We have seen that EP and BP behave differently with respect to se constructions involving transitive verbs with prepositionless complements. That is to say, while both impersonal se and passive se are allowed in EP, only impersonal se is admitted in BP. BP also departs from EP in being able to drop impersonal se in generic tenses (see e.g. Galves 1987, Nunes 1990, 1991), yielding an indefinite reading for a null third person singular subject, as illustrated in (34) below.

(34)  
a. Não **usa** mais esse estilo de redação.  
    not use more this style of writing
    ‘One doesn’t use this writing style anymore.’
b. Casava muito cedo no século passado. (BP)
marry-IMPERF very early in-the century passed
‘People used to get married very early in the last century.’
c. No futuro vai descobrir remédio para tudo quanto é doença. (BP)
in-the future go discover medicine for everything which is sickness
‘In the future people will discover medicines for every kind of sickness.’

Both of these peculiarities of BP conform with the generalization that it favors lack of overt verbal agreement morphology and use of bare verbal forms whenever possible. That being so, one wonders if the sentences in (34) do indeed result from deletion of impersonal se or if they simply constitute another instantiation of the weakening of third person plural morphology, which can convey an arbitrary reading (see Cinque 1988), as illustrated in (35).

\[(35)\]
\[
a. \text{Telefonaram para você.} \\
\quad \text{called to you} \\
\quad \text{‘There was a phone call for you.’} \\
\]
\[
b. \text{Estão batendo na porta.} \\
\quad \text{are knocking in-the door} \\
\quad \text{‘Someone is knocking on the door.’} \\
\]

One crucial difference between the sentences in (34), on the one hand, and (35), on the other, is that the indefinite subject necessarily excludes the speaker in (35), but not in (34). Recall that impersonal se constructions may or may not include the speaker and this may be even disambiguated in some EP dialects via doubling (see (28)). Based on the fact that the interpretation of (34) is actually closer to the one we finds in impersonal se constructions than the one found in constructions with arbitrary third person plural, Nunes (1990) argues that sentences such as (34) do result from deletion of the impersonal se. As Nunes (1990) further points out, this reasoning is also consistent with the diachronic facts of BP: constructions such as (34) emerged in the 19th century in BP, after the impersonal se construction started being the canonical impersonal construction, leading the passive se construction to their present-day obsolescence.

The final contrast between BP and EP we would like to mention here is related to their differences with respect to the availability of null subjects. As BP became a partial null subject language, it started favoring overtly expressed subjects in syntactic contexts where a null subject language of the Romance type chooses a null pronominal as the unmarked option. Accordingly, impersonal se came to be more frequently expressed within infinitival clauses in BP than in EP, as a strategy to support an arbitrary/generic interpretation for the infinitival subject. This contrast between BP and EP is especially clear in prepositioned infinitival clauses such as the ones in (36) and (37), in which EP noticeably disfavors, or even excludes, the presence of impersonal se, in the same way that it excludes other overt subjects.

\[(36)\]
\[
a. \text{O mar está perigoso para nadar.} \quad \text{(BP: OK; EP: OK)} \\
\quad \text{the sea is dangerous for swim} \\
\quad \text{‘The sea is currently dangerous for swimming.’} \\
\]
\[
b. \text{O mar está perigoso para se nadar.} \quad \text{(BP: OK; EP:??)} \\
\quad \text{the sea is dangerous for SE swim} \\
\quad \text{‘The sea is currently dangerous for one to swim.’} \\
\]

\[(37)\]
\[
a. \text{Nova Iorque e Barcelona são cidades fáceis de gostar.} \quad \text{(BP:??; EP: OK)} \\
\quad \text{New York and Barcelona are cities easy of like} \\
\quad \text{‘It is easy to like New York or Barcelona.’} \\
\]

b. Nova Iorque e Barcelona são cidades fáceis de se gostar. (BP: OK; EP: *)
   New York and Barcelona are cities easy of SE like
   ‘It’s easy for one to like New York or Barcelona.’

c. Nova Iorque e Barcelona são cidades fáceis da gente gostar. (BP: OK; EP: *)
   New York and Barcelona are cities easy of us like
   ‘It’s easy for us to like New York or Barcelona.’

The discussion above has considered some of the “macroproperties” of constructions involving passive se and impersonal se. We will now examine some properties of se related to its status as a clitic, focusing on impersonal se in order to be able to make a comparison between BP and EP.

3.2 Impersonal se: syntactic placement and co-occurrence restrictions

The reader might have noticed that although we said that BP is essentially a proclitic system, the sentences in (30a-c), for instance, all involve enclisis and are acceptable in BP. In fact, the impersonal se is exceptional in BP in that in absence of proclisis triggers, it is in general enclitic and this has surprising consequences. In order to examine them, let us first consider the paradigm in (38) in BP, which involves clitics other than impersonal se.

(38) **BP:**
   a. Me viram/*viram-me no cinema.
      me saw/*saw-me in-the movies
      ‘People saw me at the movies.’
   b. Eles não te criticaram/*criticaram-te.
      they not you criticized/criticized-you
      ‘They didn’t criticize you.’
   c. Você deve, sem sombra de dúvida, se inscrever na competição.
      you should without shade of doubt SE register in-the competition
      ‘No doubt you should register for the competition.’
   d. *Você se deve/deve-se, sem sombra de dúvida, inscrever na competição.
      you SE should/should-SE without shade of doubt register in-the competition
      ‘No doubt you should register for the competition.’
   e. Você não deve, sem conhecer as regras, se inscrever na competição.
      you not should without knowing the rules SE register in-the competition
      ‘You shouldn’t register for the competition without knowing the rules.’
   f. *Você não se deve/deve-se, sem conhecer as regras,
      you not SE should/should-SE without knowing the rules
      inscrever na competição.
      register in-the competition
      ‘You shouldn’t register for the competition without knowing the rules.’

Example (38a) shows that proclisis is required even if the clitic ends up in sentence initial position. When auxiliaries are involved, the clitic procliticizes to the main verb, as shown by the contrast between (38c) and (38d); in other words, clitic climbing is not allowed. Interestingly, the presence of negation, which triggers proclisis in EP, does not alter the basic pattern in BP, as shown in (38e) and (38f). This could be interpreted as suggesting that once BP became a proclitic system, the old proclisis triggers became vacuous in the new system.

Surprisingly, this very plausible analysis makes incorrect predictions for impersonal se, as shown in (39).
(39) **BP:**

- **a.** Contratou-se/*Se contratou um novo professor.  
  hired-SE/SE hired a new teacher  
  ‘One hired a new teacher.’

- **b.** Não se contratou/*contratou-se um novo professor.  
  not SE hired/hired-SE a new teacher  
  ‘One didn’t hire a new teacher.’

- **c.** *Deve, sem sombra de dúvida, se contratar um novo professor.  
  should without shade of doubt SE hire a new teacher  
  ‘One should hire a new teacher.’

- **d.** Deve-se, sem sombra de dúvida, contratar um novo professor.  
  should-SE without shade of doubt a new teacher  
  ‘No doubt one should hire a new professor.’

- **e.** *Não deve, sem haver justa causa, se despedir um professor.  
  not should without having just cause SE fire a teacher  
  ‘One shall not fire a professor without just cause.’

- **f.** *Não deve-se, sem haver justa causa, despedir um professor.  
  not should-SE without having just cause fire a teacher  
  ‘Without just cause one should not fire a professor.’

- **g.** Não se deve, sem haver justa causa, despedir um professor.  
  not SE should without having just cause fire a teacher  
  ‘One shall not fire a professor without just cause.’

The paradigm in (39) shows that as opposed to the other clitics of BP, impersonal *se* must encliticize in absence of a proclisis trigger; hence the contrast between (39a) and (39b). Furthermore, when auxiliary verbs are involved, the clitic enclitizes to the finite auxiliary; hence the contrast between (39c) and (39d). When negation is added to the picture, it triggers proclisis to the finite auxiliary and not to the main verb (see (39e-g)). In other words, clitic climbing is allowed with impersonal *se* in environments where this is not possible with other clitics (cf. (38f)). In this regard, the positions occupied by the clitic in (38c-f), on the one hand, and (39e-g), on the other, are especially revealing, for the reflexive and the impersonal clitic are homophonous. This leads us to conclude that in BP, impersonal *se* has lexical specifications that set it apart from the other clitics of the language, including the third person reflexive clitic, which is also spelled out as *se*.

Let us hold this conclusion for a moment and turn our attention to EP. Like other Romance languages, EP does not allow impersonal *se* to co-occur with reflexive *se* within the same clause, as illustrated by the contrast between the monoclausal structures in (40) and the biclausal structure in (41).

(40)  

- **a.** *Levanta-se-se cedo neste país.  
  rises-SE IMP-SE REFL early in-this country  
  ‘One gets up early in this country.’

- **b.** *Vai-se levantar-se cedo amanhã.  
  goes-SE IMP rise-SE REFL early tomorrow  
  ‘People are going to get up early tomorrow.’

(41) **Soube-se ter-se ele suicidado.  
  knew-SE IMP have-SE REFL he committed-suicide  
  ‘It was heard that he committed suicide.’

Taking the contrast between (40) and (41) as a starting point, Martins and Nunes (2014a) examine control structures in EP where the controller is the impersonal clitic *se* and the controlled predicate has an instance of reflexive *se*. As shown in (42), the result they find is
that control structures behave like monoclausal structures as far as the co-occurrence restriction on the two clitics is concerned, regardless of the surface distance between the two clitics.

(42)  
\[\text{EP:}\]
  
a. *Quer-se sentar-se (e não se pode).  
  \text{wants-SE IMP sit-SE REFLEX and not SE IMP can}
  \text{One wants to sit down but can’t.}  
b. *Conseguiu-se evitar sentar-se na última fila.  
  \text{managed-SE IMP avoid sit-SE REFLEX in-the last row}
  \text{One managed to avoid sitting in the last row.}  
c. *Tentou-se conseguir evitar sentar-se na última fila.  
  \text{tried-SE IMP manage avoid sit-SE REFLEX in-the last row}
  \text{One tried to manage to avoid sitting in the last row.}

Martins and Nunes argue that the contrast between (41) and (42) can be accounted for if one adopts the movement theory of control (see e.g. Hornstein 1999, 2001 and Boeckx, Hornstein, and Nunes 2010). Since (41) does not involve control, each clitic is generated and surfaces in a different clause. By contrast, from the perspective of the movement theory of control, the impersonal clitic se in (42) should be generated in the most embedded clause and then move to its surface position, leaving copies behind. That being so, we end having a copy of impersonal se and the reflexive se in the most embedded clause, which should then be ruled out by the co-occurrence restriction that excludes the sentences in (40).

Bearing this in mind, let us examine comparable data in BP. At first sight, (43) below seems to show that BP behaves like EP in disallowing impersonal se and reflexive se in a local domain. However, when the data in (44) below are taken into account, we realize that the explanation cannot be as simple as that, for the two clitics are arguably within the same domain but the result is grammatical.

(43)  
\[\text{*Pode-se se sentar em qualquer lugar.}\]
  \text{can.3SG-SE IMP SE REFLEX sit in any place}
  \text{One can sit anywhere.}

16 Sentences without auxiliaries such as (40a), repeated below in (i), are also ungrammatical in BP. However, this is not very telling, for the reflexive is in an enclitic position and this is independently ruled out in BP, as seen in (38). (ib) controls for this noise (the reflexive se is proclitic and the impersonal se, enclitic), but the result is still unacceptable, presumably because movement of the reflexive across the impersonal se induces a minimality violation.

(i)  
a. *Levanta-se-se cedo neste país.  
  \text{rises-SE IMP-SE REFLEX early in-this country}
  \text{One gets up early in this country.}

17 Martins and Nunes (2014a,b) argue that (strong) phases, rather than clauses, constitute the relevant domain for computing the co-occurrence restriction involving indefinite and reflexive se. Thus, the two instances of se in the sentences of (43) and (44) may fall within the same strong phasal domain even if modals in BP are also to be analysed as raising verbs, for the light verb associated with raising verbs is assumed to be defective and not head a strong phase (see Chomsky 2001). For purposes of exposition, we will put this refinement aside, as it does not affect the reasoning to be presented below. See Martins and Nunes (2014a,b) for relevant discussion.
(44) a. Não se pode se divertir com um barulho desses. (BP)  
   not SEIMP can SEREFL enjoy with a noise of-these  
   ‘One can’t have a good time with such a level of noise.’
   
   b. Não se deve se levantar tarde.  
   not SEIMP should SEREFL raise late  
   ‘One shouldn’t get up late.’

Our proposal is that what matters in BP is simply adjacency. Thus, the sentences in (44)  
are well formed because the clitics are not adjacent to each other. In fact, sentences such as  
(43) may become grammatical if parenthetical material disrupts the adjacency between the  
two clitics, as illustrated in (45).

(45) Pode-se, salvo engano, se sentar em qualquer lugar. (BP)  
   can-SEIMP saving mistake SEREFL sit in any place  
   ‘I think one can sit in any place.’

Similar considerations apply to BP control configurations analogous to (42), where the  
impersonal *se is the controller and an embedded predicate contains the reflexive *se. As  
illustrated in (46) below, an ill-formed results arises only if impersonal *se and reflexive *se  
are adjacent. If phonetic material or a pause intervenes between the two clitics, the co-occurrence  
restriction is circumvented, as shown in (47).\^18

(46) a. *Tentou-se se livrar do problema. (BP)  
   tried-SEIMP SEREFL set.free of-the problem  
   ‘One tried to get rid of the problem.’

   b. *Esperava-se se sentar na primeira fila. (BP)  
   expect-SEIMP SEREFL sit in-the first row  
   ‘One expected to be able to sit in the front row.’

(47) a. Tentou-se de todas as formas se livrar do problema. (BP)  
   tried-SEIMP of all the forms SEREFL set.free of-the problem  
   ‘One tried in every possible way to get rid of the problem.’

   b. Esperava-se conseguir se sentar na primeira fila. (BP)  
   expect-SEIMP manage SEREFL sit in-the first row  
   ‘One expected to be able to sit in the front row.’

\^18 Pauses are more naturally inserted between a control verb and its infinitival complement than between an  
auxiliary and the main verb, as illustrated in (i) below. Accordingly, pauses are able to circumvent the co-occurrence  
restriction on two instances of *se in (iia) in BP, but not in (iib).

(i)  
   a. Alguém tentou # sair mais cedo. (BP)  
      someone tried leave more early  
      ‘Someone tried to leave earlier.’

   b. ??Alguém vai # sair mais cedo. (BP)  
      someone goes leave more early  
      ‘Someone is going to leave earlier.’

(ii)  
   a. Tentou-se # se levantar mais cedo. (BP)  
      tried-SEIMP SEREFL rise more early  
      ‘One tried to get up earlier.’

   b. *Vai-se # se levantar mais cedo. (BP)  
      goes-SEIMP SEREFL rise more early  
      ‘One is going get up earlier.’
Assuming that something along these lines is on the right track, one wonders why EP and BP behave so differently with respect to the conditions they impose for the restriction on the co-occurrence of impersonal and reflexive se. Our conjecture is that this has to do with the exceptional properties of impersonal se in BP. In EP, the impersonal and the reflexive are not only phonologically identical, but are subject to the exact same conditions on syntactic clitic placement. By contrast, in BP only their phonetic spell-out is identical, for they go completely separate ways as far as syntactic clitic placement goes. Thus, this co-occurrence restriction is more syntactic in nature in EP as it makes reference to clausal domains but not to adjacency. By contrast, in BP the restriction is more phonological in nature, making crucial reference to adjacency.19

5. Conclusion
In this chapter we have described participial passives (in particular, verbal passives as opposed to adjectival passives) and passive se and impersonal se constructions in EP and BP with respect to their agreement, Case, word order, and interpretive properties. By and large, we have seen that BP and EP essentially pattern similarly with respect to participial passives, except when distinct grammatical properties of each dialect interfere (e.g. agreement and clitic placement). However, the two dialects were shown to sharply split with respect to se constructions: First, only EP productively allows passive se constructions. And second, the contextual distribution of impersonal se in BP and EP is considerably different.

References

19 Also consistent with the phonological nature of the restriction in BP is the fact that, as opposed to EP, it does not allow the complementizer se ‘if’ and impersonal se to be adjacent, as shown in (i). Thanks to Carolina França (p.c.) for bringing this point to our attention.

(i) a. Se se contratar um novo professor, os problemas serão resolvidos. (EP:OK; BP:*)
   if SESEMP hire a new teacher, the problems will be solved
   ‘If a new teacher is hired, the problems will be solved.’
b. Se não se contratar um novo professor, os problemas não serão resolvidos. (EP/BP:OK)
   if not SESEMP hire a new teacher, the problems not will be solved
   ‘If a new teacher is not hired, the problems won’t be solved.’


