



Habitual sentences with *costumar* 'use to': Issues of tense and interaction with frequentative adjuncts

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This paper analyses the expression of habitual values in Portuguese, focusing on the auxiliary verb *costumar* 'use to'. First, the concept of habituality (and its distinction from genericity, frequentativity, and iterativity) is discussed, and an overview of the various ways of signalling habituality in Portuguese is provided. Then, three topics take centre stage, one concerning tense and two concerning the interaction of *costumar* with temporal adjuncts of different types. With regard to tense, the versatility of the imperfective past of *costumar* is examined, noting that this tense form can convey values which are typically reserved to the perfective past and the pluperfect. Regarding the interaction with adjuncts, the combination of *costumar* with adjuncts that redundantly express habituality (e.g., *habitualmente* 'usually') is first addressed. Subsequently, the combination of *costumar* with a set of allied adjuncts, grouped under the cover term 'frequentative', is scrutinized. These include adjuncts that indicate whether exceptions to the habitual pattern are more or less frequent (e.g., *muitas vezes* 'often' vs. *às vezes* 'sometimes'), and adjuncts expressing correlation between eventualities, frequency sensu stricto, or cyclicity (e.g., *uma vez por semana* 'once a week'). Portuguese is systematically compared with English throughout the text. The neo-Reichenbachian framework of Discourse Representation Theory (Hans Kamp) is used for formal analyses.



1. Introduction

1.1. Topic and structure

This paper analyses the expression of habitual values in Portuguese, focusing on the use of the auxiliary verb *costumar*, which has very intriguing grammatical properties. This Portuguese verb is a close counterpart of the English verb *use to* – cf. (2) –, although the latter does not occur in deictic contexts, since it only has past tense inflection. The adverb *usually* normally translates *costumar* in deictic contexts – cf. (1) –, but for simplicity I will always gloss *costumar* with ‘use to’ in this paper.

- (1) O presidente **costuma** chegar a horas.
 the president use to.PRES.3SG arrive.INF at hours
 ‘The president usually arrives on time.’
- (2) A Ana **costumava** passar férias no estrangeiro.
 the Ana use to.IPRF.3SG spend.INF holidays in.the foreign countries
 ‘Ana used to holiday abroad.’

In section 2, the general concept of habituality is discussed, separating it from allied concepts such as atemporal genericity, frequentativity and iterativity. In this section, an overview of the different ways of grammatically signalling habitual values, with an emphasis on those used in Portuguese, and on the differences between Portuguese and English, is provided. Adverbs (e.g., *habitualmente* ‘usually’), auxiliary verbs (e.g., *costumar* ‘use to’), and complex verbal expressions with adjectival or nominal bases (e.g., *ser habitual* ‘be usual’, *ter o hábito* ‘be in the habit’) are mentioned. The somehow unique grammatical properties of the verb *costumar* are briefly introduced here.

In section 3, the exceptional versatility of the imperfective past of *costumar* is scrutinized. Notably, the imperfective past forms of this auxiliary verb (e.g., *costumava*_{3SG}) can also convey semantic values typically reserved to the perfective past and the pluperfect. As we will see, past perfective forms of *costumar* (e.g., *costumou*_{3SG}),¹ as well as pluperfect forms (e.g., *costumara*_{3SG}, *tinha costumado*_{3SG}), are almost never used.

In the brief section 4, the combination of *costumar* with adjuncts that only redundantly reiterate habitual values (e.g., *costumar habitualmente* ‘usually use to’) is presented and shortly discussed.

In the much longer section 5, the combination of *costumar* with a set of allied adjuncts, commonly grouped under the cover term ‘frequentative’ is scrutinized. These include, on the one

¹ The (traditional) term “perfective past” is used throughout this paper to refer to the non-compound form “pretérito perfeito simples (do indicativo)”; I do not assume, though, that this tense form has the typical semantic analysis of perfective forms (in which result states are centrally considered).

hand, adjuncts that signal the ‘strength of the habit’, i.e., whether exceptions to habitual patterns are more or less frequent (e.g., *costumar sempre* ‘always use to’ vs. *costumar muitas vezes* ‘often use to’ vs. *costumar às vezes* ‘sometimes use to’), and, on the other hand, adjuncts that convey repeated action values analogous to habituality, namely, correlation between eventualities (e.g., *costumar sempre que...* ‘use to whenever’), frequency sensu stricto (e.g., *costumar duas vezes por semana* ‘use to twice a week’), and cyclicity (e.g., *costumar de dois em dois dias* ‘use to every two days’).

1.2. Methodology and data

Throughout the paper, I will use data from online corpora available on the Linguateca website (<https://www.linguateca.pt/ACDC/>), mainly CETEMPúblico (approx. 200 million words; Portuguese newspaper texts), NILC/São Carlos (approx. 34 million words; predominantly Brazilian newspaper texts), and Vercial (approx. 14 million words; Portuguese literary texts from the 16th to the 20th century). In some cases, systematic searches were conducted in order to determine relevant frequency data, but most of the time corpus examples are used merely for illustrative purposes. The main focus is on the standard variety of European Portuguese (EP), as documented (mainly) in newspaper texts available in online corpora, although Brazilian Portuguese (BP), which does not seem to differ significantly, is also taken into account.

I will also use data from the 100 million word British National Corpus [BNC] (<https://www.english-corpora.org/bnc/>) to illustrate different types of habitual predications in English, and compare them with Portuguese.

Glosses and translations are provided for all Portuguese examples.² For long sequences taken from corpora, sometimes only the part of the text which contains the relevant habitual sentence is glossed.

The logical language of Discourse Representation Theory (DRT), basically as defined in Kamp and Reyle (1993), is used to represent the semantic values discussed.

2. The expression of habitual values

2.1. Basic distinctions

In the literature, the terms ‘habitual’, and ‘habituality’, are not always used with the same meaning, and to cover exactly the same type of grammatical constructions. However, it has generally been assumed that they involve the repetition of episodic eventualities with a certain regularity:

² The main abbreviations used in the glosses are, in alphabetical order: ACC (accusative), COND (conditional), DAT (dative), FUT (future), GER (‘gerúndio’), IMP (imperative), IMPERS.CLIT. (impersonal clitic), INF (infinitive), INTR.CLIT. (intrinsic clitic), IPRF (imperfective past), PL (plural), PRES (present), PTCP (past participle), PLUPRF (pluperfect), PRF (perfective past), RECP.CLIT. (reciprocal clitic), SG (singular), SUBJ (subjunctive).

“habitual sentences... are typically described as ‘making reference’ to some regular, repeated activity or event” (Carlson, 2012, p. 829);

“habitual sentences intuitively generalise over patterns of events” (Krifka et al., 1995, p. 17).

Consequently, habitual predications are distinguished from episodic stative predications, both individual-level and stage-level (like *o Pedro é francês* ‘Pedro is French’, *o Pedro sabe falar francês* ‘Pedro can speak French’, *o Pedro está constipado* ‘Pedro has a cold’), and from atemporal generic predications, sometimes referred to as gnomic (like *dois mais dois são quatro* ‘two plus two is four’, *um quark é uma partícula subatômica elementar dotada de carga elétrica* ‘a quark is a subatomic elementary particle with an electric charge’, *os pinguins não voam* ‘penguins don’t fly’), which do not involve any form of repetition.³ They are also distinguished from predications sometimes called iterative (cf., e.g., Comrie, 1976, p. 27; Carlson, 2012, pp. 829–830; and, for Portuguese, Cunha 2006b [2015], pp. 211–218). These (implicitly or explicitly) express the mere repetition of eventualities, without taking into account regularities, or repeating patterns, but rather considering repetition as an intrinsic component of plural eventualities (like *a gaivota bateu as asas antes de levantar voo* ‘the seagull flapped its wings before taking off’, *o Pedro bateu à porta duas vezes antes de entrar* ‘Peter knocked on the door twice before entering’).

One domain where the boundaries of habituality are not so clear is that of frequentative expressions, in a very broad sense of the term, such as *muitas vezes* ‘often’, *sempre* ‘always’, *sempre que (chove)* ‘whenever (it rains)’, *duas vezes por semana* ‘twice a week’. Carlson (2012), for example, considers that sentences with *often* can be subsumed within the class of habitual predications (they are “habituals where the activity [forming the basis of the habitual] must occur with judged high frequency”, p. 830), but he does not take a stand on all the relevant adjuncts. Mateus et al. (1989, p. 93, n. 3), for Portuguese, distinguish the habitual aspectual value *sensu stricto* from a value they call ‘frequentativo’ (‘frequentative’), a term I borrow here, associated with adjuncts such as *muitas vezes* ‘often’ or *frequentemente* ‘frequently’. I will adopt this division as well. To be more precise, I will use the following distinctions in this paper (ignoring terminological and/or taxonomic variation in the literature):⁴

³ Krifka et al. (1995) group habitual sentences (e.g., *Simba roars when he smells food*) and atemporal generic sentences (referred to as ‘lexical characterising sentences’; e.g., *a lion weighs more than 200 lbs.*) in the same class, of what they term ‘characterising sentences’ (or ‘generic sentences’) – cf. p. 18. The interaction between genericity, at the propositional level, and reference to species (cf. Carlson, 1977), at the nominal level, is especially important, and is emphasised in this paper.

⁴ This division is comparable to, although not totally coincident with, the quadripartite division in Bertinetto & Lenci (2012, p. 854): ‘cyclicality adverbials’, ‘frequency adverbials’, ‘habituality adverbials’, ‘reiteration adverbials’.

- prototypical habitual predications, which can have explicit habituality markers (such as the verb *costumar*, or the adverb *habitualmente*, comparable to the English forms *used to* and *usually*), or can occur without explicit markers (e.g., using the so-called ‘habitual present’ or ‘habitual imperfective past’, as we will see later);
- frequentative predications, in a very broad sense of the term, distinguishing the following four subclasses:
 - (i) predications with universal and vague frequentative adjuncts, usually referred to as quantificational adverbs – e.g., *sempre* ‘always’, *muitas vezes* ‘often’, *às vezes* ‘sometimes’, *raramente* ‘rarely’;
 - (ii) predications with universally quantified temporal adjuncts, either involving direct quantification over intervals – e.g., *todas as sextas-feiras* ‘every Friday’ –, or quantification over eventualities, in what can more perspicuously be termed ‘adjuncts of correlation between eventualities’ – e.g., *sempre que X, Y* ‘whenever X, Y’; *quando X, Y* ‘when X, Y’;
 - (iii) predications with frequency adjuncts *sensu stricto* – e.g., *n vezes por semana* ‘n times a week’;
 - (iv) predications with cyclicity adjuncts – e.g., *de X em X dias* ‘every X days’, *dia sim dia não* ‘every other day’.

The combination of *costumar*, an explicit marker of habituality, with expressions from each of these four subclasses of frequentatives is relatively common, and is one of the central topics of this paper (to be dissected in section 5).

2.2. The semantic interpretation of habitual sentences – essential facts

Semantically, habitual sentences have been treated – mainly since the seminal works on discourse structure by Hans Kamp (1981) and Irene Heim (1982) – using tripartite conditions involving a restrictor and a nuclear scope (cf., e.g., Carlson, 1989; Hajičová, Partee & Sgall, 1998; Krifka et al., 1995, 23ff.). The conditions included in the restrictor can be strictly temporal, i.e., involving intervals or units of time, or situational, i.e., involving eventualities (generally of the type described in the sentence), or even – as a third possibility – involving ‘cases’ *sensu* Lewis (1975).

Bennett and Partee (2004 [1978], pp. 83–84) underscore different usage variants of the adverb *usually*, which apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Portuguese verb *costumar*: a sentence like *John usually wears a turban* (= *o John costuma andar de turbante*) can be paraphrased as ‘for most days of the week (temporal restrictor), it is true that John wears a turban on that day (nuclear scope)’; differently, a sentence like *Tai usually eats with chopsticks* (= *os tailandenses costumam comer com pauzinhos*) can be paraphrased as ‘on most occasions when Tai eat (situational restrictor), they

do so with chopsticks (nuclear scope)'; finally, a sentence like *a quadratic equation usually has two different solutions* (= *uma equação de segundo grau costuma ter duas soluções distintas*) can be paraphrased as 'in most cases (restrictor), a second-degree equation has two solutions (nuclear scope)', with the restriction clearly being neither temporal nor situational, since equations are not anchored in time.

Sometimes it is possible to include elements from different constituents of the habitual sentence in the restrictor, or to include unexpressed inferred elements of various kinds: as Krifka et al. (1995, p. 46) state, "the contents of a restrictor can vary widely". This variation is furthermore the source of ambiguities, which are frequent in habitual sentences. Observe, for instance, a sentence like *o Paulo costuma beber Coca-Cola Zero* 'Paulo usually drinks Coke Zero', which can be paraphrased as 'Paulo is a habitual Coke Zero consumer', or as 'whenever Paulo drinks Coke (which he might not do often), he usually drinks Coke Zero, not the others types of Coke'. It is also worth emphasising that habitual predications often do not include any explicit information about the restrictor, as in the case of *Mary smokes*, but that information is assumed by the interlocutors by 'accommodation' (cf. Krifka et al., 1995, 56); Ferreira (2016, pp. 362, 378) contends that this type of sentences, for which he uses the term 'simple habituals' are of a totally different sort, and should not be treated with tripartite structures. I will not discuss this issue here.

Despite what has been said about tripartite structures, for simplicity's sake, I will sometimes use the binary operator HAB to refer to the habitual predications, in simplified formulae of the type [ev = HAB (ev')] (i.e., without emphasising its tripartite character, involving quantification with a restrictor and a nuclear scope).

Another crucial aspect of the semantic interpretation of habitual sentences is time location. Habits can be located in time.⁵ They involve an interval, typically a long one, in which the habit is assumed to exist (t_{HAB}). As Boneh and Doron (2008, p. 19) point out:

"Habituals are characterized by iterativity over a relatively long duration. Intuitively, a long period is needed in order to construe an iterated event as a regular pattern that may count as a habit. ... the interval must be long enough so as to be in principle unbounded, such that any event satisfying [a predicate] P could be followed by yet another event satisfying P."

The 'interval of the habit' can be explicitly mentioned, through certain time adjuncts, as in the following two examples, with the Portuguese counterparts of *since*- and *when*-phrases, respectively:

⁵ Following the tradition in the literature, I will use the term 'habit' to refer to any eventuality identified by a habitual predication, not only, as is usual in everyday language (or in psychology studies), to refer to eventualities involving human entities. Therefore, *costuma nevar na Serra da Estrela* 'it usually snows in Serra da Estrela', or *este hotel costuma estar cheio no Verão* 'this hotel is usually fully booked in Summer' will be said to identify habits, in this loose sense of the word, much in the same way as *o Pedro costuma jantar cedo* 'Pedro usually eats dinner early' does.

- (3) O Pedro **costuma** deitar-se tarde [**desde** que deixou
the Pedro use to.PRES.3SG lay.INF + INTR.CLIT. late since that quit.PRF.3SG
de fumar]_{thAB}.
of smoke.INF
'Pedro has been in the habit of going to bed late since he quit smoking.'
- (4) [**Quando** eu era criança]_{thAB}, **costumava** brincar neste jardim.
when I be.IPRF.1SG child use to.IPRF.1SG play.INF in.this garden
'When I was a child, I used to play in this garden'

However, as is abundantly underlined in the literature, the interval where a habit is assumed to persist is often merely implicit: an isolated phrase like *o Pedro costuma deitar-se tarde* 'Pedro is in the habit of going to bed late'/'Pedro usually goes to bed late' describes a habit that exists throughout a past interval extending up to the utterance time, whose beginning does not have to be specified (and whose end is not in question).

2.3. Grammatical markers of habituality in Portuguese (and English) – overall view

In Portuguese, as in English and many other languages, habituality can be expressed in various ways. With respect to habitual sentences, two main cases should be distinguished: the presence of habituality without explicit grammatical markers of this value, and the presence of habituality explicitly triggered by grammatical markers.

Portuguese grammatical tradition, like many others, has often associated the presence of habituality in sentences without explicit adverbial markers with the use of specific verb tenses, for instance, the so-called 'habitual present' (cf. (5)), or 'habitual imperfective past' (cf. (6)), which would allegedly be direct triggers of the values in question (cf., e.g., Oliveira, 2013, pp. 514, 521–522).

- (5) O Pedro **joga** ténis.
the Pedro play.PRES.3SG tennis
'Pedro plays tennis.'
- (6) Na época, o Pedro **jogava** ténis. Agora já não pratica
at.the epoch the Pedro play.IPRF.3SG tennis now already NEG practice.PRES.3SG
nenhum desporto.
no sport
'At the time, Pedro played tennis. He no longer plays any sport.'

However, it is important to emphasise that virtually all other verb tenses are compatible with the expression of habituality – cf. (7)–(9) –, and that habitual values can even exist in clauses with non-finite verb forms – cf. (10)–(11).

- (7) O Pedro já **jogou** ténis, quando era adolescente.
 the Pedro already play.PRF.3SG tennis when be.IPRF.3SG teenager
 Agora já não joga.
 now already NEG play.PRES.3SG
 ‘Pedro used to play tennis when he was a teenager. He doesn’t play tennis anymore.’
- (8) Acho que nunca **jogarei** ténis. É um desporto
 think.PRES.1SG that never play.FUT.1SG tennis be.PRES.3SG a sport
 muito agressivo para as articulações.
 very aggressive to the joints
 ‘I don’t think I’ll ever play tennis: it puts a lot of stress on your joints.’
- (9) Se **jogasse** ténis, o Pedro saberia explicar-te isso.
 if play.IPRF.SUBJ.3SG tennis the Pedro know.COND.3SG explain.INF + you.ACC that
 ‘If Pedro played tennis, he would be able to explain that to you.’
- (10) o Pedro gostava de **jogar** ténis, porque se ganha
 the Pedro like.IPRF.3SG of play.INF tennis because IMPERS.CLIT. earn.PRES.3SG
 muito dinheiro.
 much money
 ‘Pedro would like to play tennis because you can make a lot of money from it.’
- (11) **Jogando** ténis, o Pedro ganharia certamente muito dinheiro.
 play.GER tennis the Pedro earn.COND.3SG certainly much money
 ‘If Pedro played tennis, he would certainly make a lot of money.’

This fact challenges the hypothesis of a direct link between form and semantic value, involving verb inflection and habituality marking. The unlikelihood of such direct association is clearly stated by several authors for English – cf., e.g., Carlson (2012, p. 833), or Michaelis (2006, p. 13); the latter, using ‘generic’ as a cover term that includes habituals, claims:

“[Östen] Dahl [in his 1995 paper ‘The Marking of the Episodic/Generic Distinction in Tense-Aspect Systems’] has assumed that there is a single marker of genericity in each of the languages in his study, taking the present tense to be the ‘generic marker’ for English. This appears to be a mistake, however, as generic statements can be expressed by a number of other tense-aspect combinations. These include the simple past and past progressive, as exemplified in [*Dogs chased cars in those days, and during that summer parents were keeping their children indoors*] ..., respectively.” Michaelis (2006, p. 13)

In the same line, Krifka et al. (1995) postulate a “covert generic operator” (p. 53), which is introduced “at some point in the syntactic derivation” (p. 39), and claim that the “characterizing

sentences... often are not clearly marked. Sentences with verbal predicates in the simple present tense, the past tense or the future can (in English) have... a characterizing... interpretation” (p. 6).

I also believe that it is more reasonable to assume that habituality values occur without explicit marking in Portuguese, in sentences like (5) through (11) above.

On the other hand, languages normally have a set of explicit markers of habituality, which in Portuguese include, most notably (see also Cunha, 2006a, p. 340; Cunha, 2006b [2015], p. 223–224):

- (i) adverbs such as *habitualmente* ‘usually’;
- (ii) the auxiliary verb *costumar* ‘use to’, which is the focus of this paper;
- (iii) verbal expressions with a nominal or an adjectival base (related to the Latin etyma *habitus*, *usus* or *consuetudo*) such as *ter o hábito* [have_{INF} the habit], *ter por hábito* [have_{INF} by habit], *ser habitual* [be_{INF} habitual], *ser usual* [be_{INF} usual], *ser hábito* [be_{INF} habit], *ser costume* [be_{INF} custom]

Just to have an idea of their relative prevalence: in CETEMPúblico, *costumar* has approx. 7,200 records, *habitualmente* approx. 5,100 records, and *ter o hábito* and *ter por hábito* approx. 200 records each.

Compare sentence (12), with the so-called ‘habitual present’, with the subsequent roughly equivalent four sentences, containing explicit markers of habituality:⁶

- (12) O Pedro **janta** às sete horas.
the Pedro dine.PRES.3SG at.the seven hours
‘Peter (usually) eats dinner at seven.’
- (13) **Habitualmente**, o Pedro janta às sete horas.
usually the Pedro dine.PRES.3SG at.the seven Hours
- (14) O Pedro **costuma** jantar às sete horas.
the Pedro use to.PRES.3SG dine.INF at.the seven hours
- (15) O Pedro **tem** o **hábito** de jantar às sete horas.
the Pedro have.PRES.3SG the habit of dine.INF at.the seven Hours

⁶ In these cases, the different strategies are more or less equivalent. Krifka et al. (1995, p. 9) talk about the existence of “at most a slight change”, or “a minor change”, between sentences like *a lion has a bushy tail*, and *a lion usually has a bushy tail*, claiming that the difference is that “*usually* explicitly conveys the information that there may be exceptions to the rule which the sentence expresses, and that there actually are instantiations of the rule”, or that the sentence containing *usually* “might be called somewhat weaker... since it points explicitly to the fact that there might be exceptions to the rule”. I will not discuss here the possible existence of cases in which some strategies are applicable, while others are not.

- (16) **É habitual** o Pedro jantar às sete horas.
 be.PRES.3SG usual the Pedro dine.INF at.the seven hours

In English, the same three types of markers exist (cf., e.g., Krifka et al., 1995, p. 7). Let us briefly consider each subtype, and the correspondence between English and Portuguese.

The closest English counterpart of the adverb *habitualmente* is *usually*. Portuguese also uses *usualmente*, a cognate of English *usually*, but much less frequently. In the British National Corpus, there are 209 records of *habitually* vs. 18,711 records of *usually* (99%); in CETEMPúblico, the frequency of the cognates is reversed: 5,149 records of *habitualmente* (95%) vs. 243 records of *usualmente*.

As for auxiliary verbs comparable to *costumar*, English often resorts to *use to*.⁷ However, this English expression has a peculiarity that sets it apart from *costumar*: it is almost exclusively used in the simple past (*used to*, *did use to*) to refer to past habits, i.e., with a value comparable to the Portuguese imperfective past *costumava*.⁸ Present habits in English are not signalled with *use to*, but rather with other strategies, e.g., present tense only, or present tense together with *usually*. Contrariwise, Portuguese regularly uses the verb *costumar* in the present tense to represent present habits. As we will see later, in CETEMPúblico, there are approx. 5,800 records of *costumar* in the present tense (to signal present habits), corresponding to 80% of all uses of this verb in the corpus.

- (17) I **used to** have breakfast in bed on Sundays.
 Eu **costumava**_{IPRF.3SG} tomar o pequeno-almoço na cama aos domingos.
- (18) I {**usually** / ***use to**} have breakfast in bed on Sundays.
 Eu **costumo**_{PRES.3SG} tomar o pequeno-almoço na cama aos domingos.

English also has a few complex verbal expressions related to the same Latin etyma: *be in the habit of*, *have a habit of* (close counterparts of Portuguese *ter o/por hábito*); *be usual*, *be customary*, *be habitual* (morpho-syntactically parallel to Portuguese *ser habitual*, and *ser usual*); *be the custom* (morpho-syntactically parallel to Portuguese *ser costume*, and *ser hábito*).⁹ There may be significant

⁷ It is important to note that the English verb *use to* – unlike Portuguese *costumar* – doesn't always signal habituality. It can also apply to stative eventualities without any iterative value, such as *the Temple of Diana used to stand at Ephesus*, *Harry used to be an attorney*, or *the weather here used to be very mild* (the first example from Comrie, 1976, p. 27, the following two from Carlson, 2012, p. 834). The auxiliary verb *costumar* cannot normally be used to translate these sentences, rather the imperfective past (or sometimes the simple perfective past) has to be used: *o Templo de Diana ficava*_{IPRF} *em Éfeso*, *o Harry {antes era*_{IPRF}/*já foi*_{PRF}*} advogado*, *o clima dantes era*_{IPRF} *muito ameno*, respectively, for the three examples above. Sometimes, translations errors are found in published texts.

⁸ Quirk et al. (1985) and Huddleston (2002) mention sporadic uses of a pluperfect form of the verb (*had used to*), to signal anteriority to the past: "... the preterite perfect *had used* is occasionally found: *When Arthur had been at bay school, he had used to play football.*" (Huddleston, 2002, p. 115).

⁹ Observe the following examples from the British National Corpus: (i) "raiders **are in the habit of** over-estimating the extent of likely efficiency gains" [FP2]; (ii) "ministers **have a habit of** falling into line" [CH1]; (iii) "at weddings of the unpretentious kind it **was usual** for one or two singers to perform songs of their own composition" [ADW] (iv) "in this notoriously difficult area it **is customary** to look for analogies" [FBS]; (v) "he still wore his expression of

differences in frequency (and sometimes distribution) of the Portuguese and English morpho-syntactically parallel forms, which I will not address here. The comparison between these forms in the two languages, targeting possible translation problems, is an interesting topic that I leave for future investigation.

As has already been briefly mentioned, there is also a set of frequentative adjuncts that could arguably be classified as habitual in a very broad sense of the term, but which I prefer to categorise separately, as stated above, in 2.1. In this group, I include three expressions – *geralmente* ‘generally’, *normalmente* ‘normally’, and *por norma* ‘normally’ (literally ‘by norm’) –, for which the dividing line between habituals and frequentatives is exceptionally tenuous.¹⁰

To end this introductory subsection, I will note that, interestingly, speakers exploit the various grammatical possibilities of encoding habitual values for the sake of discourse (and stylistic) diversity. It is not uncommon, for instance, to find different strategies of explicitly marking habituality in close proximity (in subordination, coordination, or juxtaposition):

- (19) “...este concelho é **habitualmente** abastecido por furos
 this municipality be.PRES.3SG usually supply.PTCP by boreholes
 próprios, não **sendo habitual**, nesta época do ano,... recorrer às
 own NEG be.GER habitual in.this epoch of.the year resort.INF to.the
 captações do Ceira.”
 catchments of.the Ceira
 ‘This municipality is usually supplied by its own boreholes, and at this time of year the
 Ceira catchments are usually not used.’
 [matrix clause + subordinate gerundive clause]
 (CETEMPúblico, ext348886-soc-93a-2)
- (20) “**Habitualmente**, estes resultados, que **costumam** ser várias centenas
 usually these results that use to.PRES.3PL be.INF several hundreds
 por dia nos grandes centros hospitalares, são examinados por
 per day in.the big hospital centres be.PRES.3PL examine. PTCP by
 um biólogo...”
 a biologist
 ‘These results, usually several hundred a day in large hospitals, are usually examined by
 a biologist.’
 [matrix clause + subordinate relative clause]
 (CETEMPúblico, ext858964-nd-91b-1)

vacuous merriment, which must **have been habitual** rather than assumed in my honour” [H9N]); (vi) ‘it **had** always **been the custom** in St Mary’s for the nuns to go anywhere in the grounds to read their daily Office’ [CCM]).

¹⁰ Some contrasts may justify their separate analysis from *habitualmente* ‘usually’: *eu pratico desporto, mas não {*geralmente/normalmente/por norma/habitualmente/regulamente}* ‘I play sport, though not regularly’. I leave this issue for future investigation.

- (21) “Diana é **habitualmente** apreciada pelos fotógrafos... e
 Diana be.PRES.3SG usually appreciate.PTCP by.the photographers and
costuma ser paciente... com eles...”
 use to.PRES.3SG be.INF patient with them
 ‘Diana is usually well liked by photographers, and is usually patient with them.’
 [coordinate clauses (conjunction)]
 (CETEMPúblico, ext754678-nd-93b-1)

There is similar variation involving structures with and without explicit markers of habituality, that is, sentences with the so-called ‘habitual present’ or ‘habitual imperfective past’ often occur in very close proximity to sentences with explicit markers (such as *costumar*, or *habitualmente*):

- (22) “[Erica] Não se contava entre as pessoas que **costumam**
 Erica NEG INTR.CLIT. count.IPRF.3SG among the people that use to.PRES.3PL
adormecer em comboios...; Patrik, por outro lado, **adormecia** logo.”
 fall asleep.INF in trains Patrik by another side fall asleep.IPRF.3SG immediately
 ‘Erica wasn’t one of those people who usually fall asleep on trains; Patrik, on the other hand, fell asleep straight away.’
 (Camilla Läckberg, *O Cuco* [The Cuckoo], translated text, Porto Editora, 2023, p. 157)
- (23) “As vítimas desta tremenda doença **adoecem** na meia-idade
 the victims of.this tremendous disease fall ill.PRES.3PL in.the middle age
 e **costumam morrer**... passados no máximo cinco anos.”
 and use to.PRES.3PL die.INF past in.the maximum five years
 ‘Victims of this tremendous disease fall ill in middle age, and usually die after no more than five years.’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext934583-clt-soc-94a-1)

2.4. The expression of habituality with the Portuguese verb *costumar*

The auxiliary verb *costumar* has unique properties. It can be analysed as a unary predicate whose single argument is sentential, and behaves like a subject raising verb, as any other auxiliary verb. The status of *costumar* as a raising auxiliary verb can be confirmed (among other things) by the possibility of combining it with verbs that have no external argument, i.e., with an expletive subject: *costuma amanhecer antes das 6* ‘it usually dawns before 6’; *costumava chover mais nesta região* ‘it used to rain more in this region’; *não costuma haver problemas* ‘there are usually no problems’.

In Peres’ (1993, pp. 6–7) binary typology of aspectual auxiliary verbs, which includes ‘situation reducers’ (those that circumscribe “the initial part, a middle part, or the final part or a resultant state” of eventualities) and ‘situation iterators’ (those that create derived complex eventualities

by iteration), *costumar* stands out as the only verb that acts exclusively as a ‘situation iterator’, being unable to operate as a ‘situation reducer’.¹¹

We can consider that sentences with *costumar* identify habitual eventualities (ev), in which a pattern of more or less regular or frequent repetition of the episodic situations described in the verb argument (ev’) is assumed: in a simplified way, [ev = HAB (ev’)]. Descriptions of habitual eventualities, or habits, are generally classified in the literature as stative (cf., e.g., Moens, 1987, p. 60; Smith, 1991, p. 39; Krifka et al., 1995, p. 36; Huddleston, 2002, p. 124; Cunha, 2006a, p. 343ff.; Cunha, 2006b [2015], p. 223ff.).

Episodic situations of various Aktionsart types can be repeated, and get a habitual interpretation, hence being describable via *costumar*. See the following four examples, which illustrate the combination with a (non-permanent) state, an activity, an accomplishment, and an achievement, respectively:¹²

- (24) O céu **costuma** estar nublado.
 the sky use to.PRES.3SG be.INF cloudy
 ‘The sky is usually cloudy.’
- (25) O Pedro **costuma** correr de manhã.
 the Pedro use to.PRES.3SG run.INF of morning
 ‘Pedro usually jogs in the morning.’
- (26) O Pedro **costuma** almoçar cedo.
 the Pedro use to.PRES.3SG eat lunch.INF early
 ‘Pedro usually eats lunch early.’
- (27) O Pedro **costuma** chegar atrasado.
 the Pedro use to.PRES.3SG arrive.INF late
 ‘Pedro usually arrives late.’

The verb *costumar* is also frequently used in negative sentences to refer to the absence of habits. The negation of habits can be referred to in two different ways which converge in the same

¹¹ The synonymous verb *soer* (from Latin *solere*), which is rarely used nowadays, except in semi-fixed sequences like *como* {*sói*_{PRES.3SG}/*soía*_{IPRF.3SG}} *dizer-se* ‘as is/was usually said’ – or, less frequently, *como* {*sói*_{PRES.3SG}/*soía*_{IPRF.3SG}} *fazer-se* ‘as is/was usually done’ –, has the same behaviour. It is a cognate of the Spanish verb *soler*, which is commonly used in that language as the equivalent of *costumar*. There are only 4 records of *soer* in CETEMPúblico that do not involve the abovementioned semi-fixed sequences – e.g., “... uma criatura... discreta, que **soía**_{IPRF.3SG} **andar**_{INF} pelos Douradores de gabardina clara...” ‘a discreet creature who used to roam around the Douradores area in a light-coloured trench coat’ (CETEMPúblico, ext1055874-clt-95b-1).

¹² Cf. comparable examples in English, with the adverb *usually*, in Huddleston (2002, p. 124).

interpretation: with the negation operator in the higher proposition, applied to *costumar*, as in (28) and (30), and with the negation operator in the lower proposition, applied to the main verb, as in (29) and (31). (28) and (29) are totally equivalent sentences. A similar phenomenon is observed in English.¹³ The first construction is extremely common in Portuguese, while the second is relatively infrequent.¹⁴

- (28) O Pedro **não** se **costuma** atrasar.
the Pedro NEG INTR.CLIT. use to.PRES.3SG delay.INF
- (29) O Pedro **costuma** **não** se atrasar.
the Pedro use to.PRES.3SG NEG INTR.CLIT. delay.INF
'Pedro is usually not late.'
- (30) "... houve logo a advertência que 'a senhora juíza
there be.PRF.3SG immediately the warning that the Mrs judge
não costuma falar à comunicação social."
NEG use to.PRES.3SG speak.INF to.the communication social
'There was immediately the warning that the judge doesn't usually speak to the media.'
(CETEMPúblico, ext1091061-soc-95b-1)
- (31) "Pinheiro encontra-se em clara subida de forma... e
Pinheiro find.PRES.3SG + INTR.CLIT. in clear rise of form and
costuma não se inferiorizar nos grandes momentos..."
use to.PRES.3SG NEG INTR.CLIT. inferiorize.INF in.the big moments
'Pinheiro's physical condition is clearly improving and he doesn't usually belittle himself
at key moments.'
(CETEMPúblico, ext863136-des-92a-1)

The negation of habits with *costumar* and the implicative negative operator *nem* 'not even' – cf. (32) – is common, but with *costumar* and the negative operator *sem* 'without' seems not to be fully grammatical (and there are no records of this combination in CETEMPúblico):¹⁵

¹³ Quirk et al. (1985, p. 547), and Mittwoch, Huddleston & Collins (2002, p. 717), for example, mention the equivalence of sentences with *usually* before or after the negation operator: *I usually didn't worry about it = I didn't usually worry about it.*

¹⁴ In CETEMPúblico, only 3 records are obtained with the query [lema="costumar"] "não" (immediately adjacent elements), while 512 are obtained with the query "não" [lema="costumar"].

¹⁵ Cf. ??*Eles enviam os emails sem costumar verificar* [without use to.INF verify.INF] *os anexos.* 'They send the emails straight away and don't usually check the attachments.'

- (32) “Ele **nem** **costuma** falar muito, mas desta vez as palavras
 he not even use to.PRES.3SG speak.INF much but of.this time the words
 não lhe cabiam no peito.”
 NEG him.DAT fit.IPRF.3PL in.the chest
 ‘He doesn’t usually speak much, but this time he couldn’t keep the words to himself.’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext664369-des-98b-1)

I will return to the use of *costumar* in negative sentences at the end of section 5.1 (apropos the combination *nunca costumar* ‘never use to’).

As was already mentioned, habits – identified by *costumar*, or by other means – can be located in time, like other stative situations. There are present habits, past habits, and future habits. However, only the representation of present and past habits is common with *costumar* (or with similar predicative expressions, such as *ter o hábito* ‘be in the habit’), with the verb typically in the present or in the imperfective past, respectively.

- (33) O Pedro **costuma** jantar às 19h.
 the Pedro use to.PRES.3SG dine.INF at.the 19 hours
 ‘Pedro usually has dinner at 7pm.’
- (34) Quando o conheci, o Pedro **costumava** jantar às 19h.
 when him.ACC meet.PRF.1SG the Pedro use to.IPRF.3SG dine.INF at.the 19 hours
 ‘When I met him, Pedro used to have dinner at 7pm.’

The reference to future habits, which is rather infrequent in general (in Portuguese as in English, and possibly other languages), is not usually made with the use of *costumar* (or *ter o hábito*, for that matter). This is a somewhat puzzling fact. I will not attempt to formulate an explanatory hypothesis here, but this is certainly a topic worthy of future investigation.

- (35) Se adotar esta dieta,...
- if adopt.FUT.SUBJ.3SG this diet
- (a) *o Pedro **costumará** jantar às 19h.
 the Pedro use to.FUT.3SG dine.INF at.the 19 hours
- (b) *o Pedro **passará a costumar** jantar às 19h.
 the Pedro start.FUT.3SG to use to.INF dine.INF at.the 19 hours
- (c) ^{OK}o Pedro **passará a** jantar às 19h.
 the Pedro start.FUT.3SG to dine.INF at.the 19 hours
 ‘If Pedro adopts this diet, he will {start / get into the habit of} having dinner at 7pm.’

The description of past habits, as in (34), is of particular interest for grammatical analysis, and will be the topic of the next section.

3. The versatility of the imperfective past of *costumar*

Past habits described with *costumar* can be presented in three different ways: (i) habits that no longer exist (anteriority to the utterance time – cf. (36)) –, or, choosing a more or less specific past moment, (ii) habits that existed at that moment (overlap with a past perspective point – cf. (37)), and (iii) habits that no longer existed at that moment (anteriority to a past perspective point – cf. (38)). In the first case, there's a direct relationship with the utterance time, and hence a deictic location. In the second and third cases, there's an indirect link with the utterance time, via the selection of a past temporal perspective point (TPpt), and hence an anaphoric location.

- (36) Este hotel **costumava** estar cheio no verão. Isso já não
 this hotel use to.IPRF.3SG be.INF full in.the Summer that already NEG
 acontece.
 happen.PRES.3SG
 ‘This hotel used to be fully booked in summer. That doesn’t happen any more.’
- (37) [Há menos de cinco anos]_{TPpt}, este hotel **costumava** estar
 there be.PRES.3SG less of five years this hotel use to.IPRF.3SG be.INF
 cheio no verão.
 full in.the Summer
 ‘Less than five years ago, this hotel used to be fully booked in Summer.’
- (38) [O hotel fora demolido em 2005]_{TPpt}. Que pena! **Costumava**
 the hotel be.PLUPRF.3SG demolish.PTCP in 2005 what pity use to.IPRF.3SG
 estar cheio no verão.
 be.INF full in.the Summer
 ‘The hotel had been demolished in 2005. What a shame! It used to be fully booked in Summer.’

It is an interesting – and perhaps somewhat unexpected – grammatical fact that the reference to these three types of past habits via *costumar* is nearly always made using the imperfective past *costumava* (a tense form that typically expresses overlap with a past perspective point), and not the simple perfective past *costumou*, to signal anteriority to the utterance time, or the pluperfect *tinha costumado* or *costumara*, to signal anteriority to a past perspective point.¹⁶ Indeed,

¹⁶ García Fernández (dir.) (2006, pp. 44–45, 67–68) mentions that the auxiliary verb *sofer* (the Spanish counterpart of *costumar*) does not have perfective forms (*{Juan solió_{PRF.3SG}/Ha_{PRES.3SG} solido_{PTCP}} ir andando al trabajo ‘Juan used to walk to work.’), and García Fernández, Krivochen & Bravo (2017, p. 20) note that this verb is only used in the present and in the imperfective past (though they mention having found three examples of the infinitive, *sofer*_{INF}, in corpora). These authors attribute the restriction to the fact that *sofer*, as a habitual, signals the Imperfective Aspect (which is not really an explanation, since habitual predications, as observed, admit full anteriority to a past TPpt, or to the utterance time). García Fernández & Krivochen (2020, p. 150, fn. 7) refer that they do not accept compound

the use of the simple perfective past and the compound pluperfect of *costumar* typically yield ungrammaticality, and the use of the simple pluperfect has a literary archaic flavour to it, though it seems slightly better tolerated (cf. (44), and fn. 18).

It must be stressed that this versatility of the imperfective past seems to be a general property of habitual predications, not a specificity of sentences with *costumar*, though these stand out for their (quasi-)incompatibility with tenses expressing anteriority values (perfective past or pluperfect). In fact, in sentences with habituality predicates, like *ter o hábito* ‘be in the habit’, the imperfective past exhibits the same kind of polyvalence, but the use of the perfective past or the pluperfect is also possible – cf. (40). Likewise, the so-called ‘habitual imperfective past’, i.e., the imperfective past in sentences without explicit habituality markers, can clearly have the same range of temporal values;¹⁷ but habitual sentences without explicit markers also use the perfective past or the pluperfect – cf. (41). Let us consider, for instance, a deictic context, and notice the difference between *costumar*, on the one hand, and *ter o hábito* or verb tense without explicit habituality markers, on the other hand. In the latter cases, two equivalent possibilities exist: the deictic imperfective past, or the (monovalently deictic) simple perfective past.

- (39) Eu {costumava / *já **costumei**} fumar charutos. Já não o
 I use to.IPRF.1SG already use to.PRF.1SG smoke.INF cigars already NEG it
 faço.
 do.PRF.1SG
 ‘I used to smoke cigars. Not any more.’
- (40) Eu {tinha / já **tive**} o hábito de fumar charutos.
 I have.IPRF.1SG already have.PRF.1SG the habit of smoke.INF cigars
 ‘I was in the habit of smoking cigars.’
- (41) Eu {fumava / já **fumei**} charutos.
 I smoke.IPRF.1SG already smoke.PRF.1SG cigars
 ‘I used to smoke cigars.’

I am not in a position to formulate a general hypothesis as to why the imperfective past has this polyvalent behaviour in habitual sentences, or why *costumar* has the mentioned idiosyncrasy, which I haven’t seen discussed in the literature (cf. fn. 16, though), but I believe that the mere

forms of *soler* (such as *he*_{PRES.1SG} *solido*PTCP *hacerlo* ‘I used to do it’), but that they are possible in some dialects (e.g., in the North of Spain).

¹⁷ Compare sentence (36) with *dantes, este hotel estava*_{be.IPRF.3SG} *cheio no verão* (‘in the past, this hotel was fully booked in summer’), sentence (37) with *há menos de cinco anos, este hotel estava*_{be.IPRF.3SG} *sempre cheio no verão* (‘less than five years ago, this hotel was always fully booked in summer’), and sentence (38) with *O hotel fora demolido em 2005. Que pena! Estava*_{be.IPRF.3SG} *sempre cheio no verão* (‘The hotel had been demolished in 2005. What a shame! It was always fully booked in summer.’).

statement of the puzzle is a useful contribution, which can set the trail for future conjectures, or an explanation.

The auxiliary verb *costumar* is a very frequent lexical item. In CETEMPúblico (query [lema = “costumar”]), there are 7,222 records of this verb, 5,794 of which in the present tense, and 1,384 of which in the imperfective past, totalling 7,178 records, i.e., 99.4% of the entries. The remaining 44 forms are distributed in the following manner: subjunctive present (27), subjunctive imperfective past (2), simple present conditional (2), infinitive (7), and ‘gerúndio’ (6).

In Vercial, a corpus of literary text, there are only 2 records of the simple perfective past (one in conjunction with the present) – cf. (42)–(43) – and 1 of the (simple) pluperfect – cf. (44) – of *costumar*. *Costumar* does not occur in these tenses in CETEMPúblico.

- (42) “Sobravam à infanta ambição, energia, pertinácia: ... faltava-lhe o ferro,
 ‘the infanta had plenty of ambition, energy, pertinacity; she however lacked the iron fist’
 que a política, em todos os tempos, **costumou** e costuma
 that the politics in all the times use to.PRF.3SG and use to.PRES.3SG
 lançar na balança...”
 throw.INF in.the scales
 ‘that it is and has always been customary for politics to bring to the table’
 (Alexandre Herculano, *História de Portugal* [The History of Portugal], 1851, in Vercial)
- (43) “Mandamos... que todo aquele cujo pai ou cujo avô
 ‘we command anyone whose father or whose grandfather’
costumaram cultivar as herdades reais...
 use to.PRF.3PL cultivate.INF the estates royal
 ‘used to cultivate the crown lands’
 o faça do mesmo modo que eles.”
 ‘that he does so in the same way as they did.’
 (Alexandre Herculano, *História de Portugal* [The History of Portugal], 1851, in Vercial)
- (44) “... para as contrapesar havia... o ciúme
 ‘to counterbalance them there was the jealousy’
 com que sempre a Cúria romana **costumara** sustentar os interesses
 with which always the Curia Roman use to.PLUPRF.3SG support.INF the interests
 e imunidades do sacerdócio...”
 and immunities of.the priesthood
 ‘the Roman Curia had always exploited to support the interests and immunities of the
 priesthood’
 (Alexandre Herculano, *História de Portugal* [The History of Portugal], 1851, in Vercial)

These figures show that *costumar* is predominantly associated with present habits, frequently associated with past habits, and never associated with future habits. In addition, they attest

that the imperfective past is virtually the only verb tense used to refer to past habits, when *costumar* is used.

The analysis of the 1,384 records of *costumar* in the imperfective past (of the indicative mood) in CETEMPúblico confirms that this verb tense is regularly used for all three temporal location values mentioned above: overlap with a past TPpt, anteriority to the utterance time, and – although much less frequently – anteriority to a past TPpt. Since, as said before, *costumar* is not used in perfective tenses (either the simple perfective past, *costumou*, or the pluperfect forms, *costumara* and *tinha costumado*), it is the imperfective past, *costumava*, that conveys the values typically associated with those tenses. Let us look at each case separately:

– habits overlapping a past temporal perspective point (signalled by the italicised adjuncts in the excerpts below), i.e., in the language of the Discourse Representation Theory, $[ev' = HAB (ev)] \wedge [ev' \circ TPpt] \wedge [TPpt < n]$

- (45) “Furioso, ... decidiu... ir com um grupo de 50 a uma discoteca, onde *na altura*
 ‘furious, he decided to go with a group of 50 people to a nightclub, where at the time’
 os estrangeiros se **costumavam** reunir.”
 the foreigners INTR.CLIT. use to.IPRF.3PL gather.INF
 ‘foreigners used to meet’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext935321-soc-92b-2)

- (46) “Ray Charles procurava e transformava. Os sons e as palavras.
 ‘Ray Charles sought out and transformed. Sounds and words.’
 Nos anos 50 **costumava** alterar os textos
 in.the years 50 use to.IPRF.3SG alter.INF the texts
 ‘in the 1950s he used to change the lyrics’
 e os títulos de canções ‘gospel’ conhecidas...”
 ‘and the titles of well-known gospel songs.’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext60097-clt-92a-2)

– habits preceding the utterance time (with or without a vague reference to the past via deictic adjuncts like *antes* ‘before’), i.e., $[ev' = HAB (ev)] \wedge [ev' < TPpt] \wedge [TPpt := n]$

- (47) “A minha relação com o meu corpo mudou.
 ‘My relationship with my body has changed.’
 Eu **costumava** considerá-lo um servidor que me devia
 I use to.IPRF.1SG consider.INF + it.ACC a servant that me.ACC should.IPRF.3SG
 obedecer...”
 obey.INF
 ‘I used to consider it a servant that had to obey me.’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext54333-clt-93b-1)

- (48) “‘Toda a minha vida mudou, até o meu aspecto’, disse-nos este homem...
 ‘my whole life has changed, even the way I look has changed, said this man’
 que na orelha esquerda tem ainda a marca do brinco
 ‘who still has a mark on his left ear from the earring’
 que antes **costumava** usar...”
 that before use to.IPRF.1SG use.INF
 ‘that he used to wear’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext144591-clt-91b-1)
- habits preceding a past temporal perspective point (established by the preceding context), i.e.,
 $[ev' = HAB (ev)] \wedge [ev' < TPpt] \wedge [TPpt < n]$
- (49) “... depois de uma saltada à mesquita inacabada,
 ‘after a visit to the unfinished mosque’
 com todo o ar de um hangar ou de um edifício em obras,
 ‘that looked like a hangar or a building under construction’
 onde **costumava** pregar Ali Belhadj...,
 where use to.IPRF.3SG preach.INF Ali Belhadj
 ‘where Ali Belhadj used to preach’
 apeamo-nos e continuamos o nosso passeio costa abaixo, pela Avenida do Coronel Lotfi...”
 ‘we jumped off and continued our walk down the coast, along Colonel Lotfi Avenue’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext1517391-pol-94a-1)
- (50) “A sua condição física já não era o que **costumava** ser.”
 the his condition physical already NEG be.IPRF.3SG what use to.IPRF.3SG be.INF
 ‘His physical condition was no longer what it had once been.’
 (Camilla Läckberg, *O Cuco* [The Cuckoo], Porto Editora, 2023, p. 401)

This latter situation is clearly less common, and is only manifest when there is contextual information indicating without a doubt that, at a given past perspective point, a habit no longer existed – in (49), that Ali Belhadj no longer prayed at the abandoned mosque, or, in (50), that the physical condition of the character at stake had already changed. (50) is a curious example of translated text, where it would have looked perfectly natural to me – given the register – the choice of a pluperfect form *costumara*, in the style of Alexandre Herculano, in (44).¹⁸

¹⁸ Observe the following two examples of *costumar* in the simple pluperfect in a (recently) translated book (Camilla Läckberg & Henrik Fexeus, *A Seita* [The Cult], Suma de Letras, 2023): “Durante os anos que passaram juntos, Ellinor **costumara falar** [use to.PLUPRF.3SG talk.INF] sobre querer começar a pintar.” [‘During their years together, Ellinor had often talked about wanting to take up painting.’] (p. 365); “As pessoas que levavam os modelos de Lego a sério, o que Vincent **costumara fazer** [use to.PLUPRF.3SG do.INF] primeiro com Benjamin e, mais recentemente, com Aston, mencionam sempre os números... dos modelos...” [‘People who took Lego models seriously, which Vincent used to do, first with Benjamin and more recently with Aston, always mentioned their numbers.’] (p. 55).

The restrictions on the tenses that co-occur with *costumar* apply slightly differently to the kindred predicative expressions *ter o/por hábito* ‘be in the habit’. In CETEMPúblico, the expressions *ter o hábito de* + S_{INF}, and *ter por hábito* + S_{INF} occur just over 200 times each, in contrast with nearly 7,200 records of *costumar*, that is, they are less frequently used to express habituality. In these two expressions, the verb also predominantly occurs in the present tense and in the imperfective past. However, as mentioned, the possibility exists of using the simple perfective past of the indicative mood: 7 records in CETEMPúblico (6 of them accompanied by *sempre* ‘always’, or *nunca* ‘never’); in CETEMPúblico, there are no records of these expressions with a pluperfect form, although the combination doesn’t seem problematic at all – see sentence (52):

- (51) “De acordo com as estatísticas oficiais..., ... metade dos homens
 ‘according to official statistics, half the men’
 que **tiveram** o **hábito** de fumar abandonaram-no.”
 that have.PRF.3PL the habit of smoke.INF abandon.PRF.3PL + it.ACC
 ‘who used to smoke have now quit’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext572238-soc-94b-1)
- (52) Há dois anos, fez-se um inquérito sobre o consumo de tabaco. 30% dos inquiridos afirmaram
 ‘Two years ago, a survey was conducted on tobacco use. 30% of the respondents said
 que nunca **tinham** **tido** o **hábito** de fumar.
 that never have.IPRF.3PL have.PTCP the habit of smoke.INF
 ‘that they had never smoked’

4. Redundant marking of habituality – *costumar habitualmente* and similar combinations

It is interesting to note that speakers sometimes express habitual values by redundantly using more than one habitual marker in the same predication, with no (strong) feeling of anomaly emerging. As far as I know, this has not been acknowledged in the literature.

In CETEMPúblico, two combinations occur with some frequency:¹⁹ (i) *costumar habitualmente*, literally ‘use to habitually’ and (ii) *costumar ser {hábito/habitual}*, literally ‘use to be {habit/habitual}’.²⁰ I found 24 records of these two combinations in the corpus, a low number given that there are almost 7,200 records of *costumar* in it. A third combination, of an arguably different

¹⁹ Queries: [lema = “costumar”] [] {0,5} “habitualmente”; [lema = “costumar”] [] {0,5} “hábito|habitual” (+ parallel queries in reverse order).

²⁰ Cf. comparable examples in English, from the British National Corpus: “**usually** the P E instructor **used to** go round and whack us with a slipper” (Fox FM News: radio programme; BNC, KRT); “**It used to be the custom** that the issue of the writ should be moved by chief whip of the party in the House of Commons...” (Harry Calvert, *An introduction to British constitutional law*, 1985; BNC, C8R).

type – *costumar* {*geralmente/normalmente*} ‘use to {generally/normally}’ – will be discussed in section 5.1. Naturally, stylistic issues may be pertinent, as these redundancies may be perceived by some speakers as constructions to be avoided or to be used very sparingly.

It should be noted that in the entire Verbal corpus, there is not a single occurrence of these constructions. In NILC/São Carlos, no record of these combinations is found either; in the much larger Corpus Brasileiro (more than 900 million words), there are 5 records of *costumar* V *habitualmente*, 5 of *habitualmente costumar*, and 1 of *costumar ser habitual*. So, apparently, the combinations at stake seem even more infrequent in BP than in EP. All in all, the redundant marking of habituality appears as a strongly marked option in Portuguese.

– *costumar* + *habitualmente*

There are 17 records of this combination in CETEMPúblico: 5 with *costumar* preceding *habitualmente*, 12 with *habitualmente* preceding *costumar*.

- (53) “a Praça Minutka,... onde se **costumam** **habitualmente** reunir
the Square Minutka where INTR.CLIT. use to.PRES.3PL usually gather.INF
os combatentes chechenos”
the fighters Chechen
‘Minutka Square, where Chechen fighters usually gather’
(CETEMPúblico, ext1282826-pol-95a-2)
- (54) “...[a neta] **costumava** utilizar **habitualmente** aquela passagem
the granddaughter use to.IPRF.3SG utilize.INF usually that passageway
quando se deslocava a Algueirão...”
when INTR.CLIT. dislocate.IPRF.3SG to Algueirão
‘Her granddaughter used to walk through that passageway when she got off the train in Algueirão.’
(CETEMPúblico, ext737787-soc-93a-1)
- (55) “**Habitualmente**, iniciativas deste género não **costumam** ser queimadas
usually initiatives of.this kind NEG use to.PRES.3PL be.INF burn.PTCP
logo no início do ano parlamentar.”
immediately at.the beginning of.the year parliamentary
‘Initiatives of this kind are not usually used up at the start of the parliamentary year.’
(CETEMPúblico, ext688188-pol-93b-2)

– *costumar* + {*ser hábito/ser habitual*}

There are 7 records of this combination in CETEMPúblico: 2 with *ser hábito*, 5 with *ser habitual* (always with *costumar* preceding *ser hábito/habitual*).

- (56) “Segundo a GNR..., **costuma ser hábito** a igreja estar aberta...
 according to the GNR use to.PRES.3SG be.INF habit the church be.INF open
 àquela hora...”
 at.that hour
 ‘According to the GNR, the church is usually open at that time of the day.’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext523707-soc-96b-2)
- (57) “O editor... diz que o sector ‘ainda não sentiu o crescimento das vendas
 ‘the publisher says that the sector has not yet felt the growth in sales’
 que **costuma ser habitual** nesta época do ano.’”
 that use to.PRES.3SG be.INF habitual at.this epoch of.the year
 ‘that is usual at this time of year’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext762438-nd-94b-2)

There are also some other combinations in CETEMPúblico with a similar redundant effect (which were not systematically searched), like:

- (58) “... Wittgenstein foi-se rodeando daquela aura
 ‘little by little, Wittgenstein surrounded himself with that aura’
 que **por hábito costuma** amuralhar as personagens.”
 that by habit use to.PRES.3SG wall.INF the characters
 ‘that usually walls characters in’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext420403-clt-95a-2)

Marginally, it should be observed that the grammatical forms that are redundantly applied within the same proposition in the examples of this section are often applied – standardly and without any redundancy – in distinct nearby sentences, linked by, e.g., coordination or subordination – cf. examples (19)–(21) above.

5. Combinations of *costumar* with frequentative adjuncts

The combination (within the same predication) of *costumar* and frequentative adjuncts of the various types mentioned in section 2.1 above is relatively frequent. I observed it in ca. 3% of all occurrences of *costumar* in CETEMPúblico.

As for the combinations with quantificational adverbs of the type dealt with in 5.1 (*sempre* ‘always’, *muitas vezes* ‘often’, *às vezes* ‘sometimes’, and the like), I found at least 106 records in CETEMPúblico, 33 in Vercial, 68 in NILC/São Carlos [BP]. As for the combinations with adjuncts of the type dealt with in 5.2 (*sempre que* ‘whenever’, *duas vezes por semana* ‘twice a week’, *dia sim dia não* ‘every other day’, and the like), I did not count them all, but I will mention some partial quantification data below. This data may be of interest when considering stylistic preferences,

since, as we will see, the contribution of *costumar* in these contexts is small, and its presence can even be superfluous at times.

It must be noted that the association of habituality with quantification over eventualities is common, and has been discussed at length in the literature. Ferreira (2016, p. 378), for instance, distinguishes, in his tripartite typology of habituais, two subclasses where this quantification exists, ‘habituais with adverbs of quantification’ and ‘bare habituais’ (‘simple habituais’, as *John smokes*, being the remaining class): “Habituais with adverbs of quantification (*When...*, *John always smokes*) involve an overt quantifier over singular events. (...) bare habituais (*When...*, *John smokes*) involve a silent plural event determiner that also appears under the scope of a plurality-seeking imperfective operator.”. Cunha (2006b, pp. 230–231) also briefly mentions combinations of habitual and frequentative expressions in Portuguese.

5.1. *Costumar* and universal or vague frequentative adjuncts

5.1.1. General issues

As has been already mentioned, a habitual predication implies the existence of a repeating pattern of episodic situations, with varying – higher or lower – frequency. The patterns underlying habituais are intrinsically vague: how many repetitions of a given action are necessary for it to be considered a habit? Obviously, patterns are, on the one hand, dependent on world knowledge about the described eventualities – e.g., *costumar haver terremotos de grande intensidade* ‘earthquakes of great intensity usually occur’ in principle requires lower frequency than *costumar chover* ‘usually rain’ (unless we’re talking about the Atacama Desert). On the other hand, they are dependent on subjective judgement – e.g., different people may associate different regularity patterns to *costumar ir ao ginásio* ‘usually work out in the gym’. Comrie (1976) considers that the definition of such patterns is not even a linguistic issue.²¹

Habits usually allow for exceptions, and this is a paramount linguistic question. Krifka et al. (1995) consider that “characterizing sentences typically allow for exceptions” (p. 61), and speak of the “quasi-universal force of characterizing sentences” (p. 52).²² To put it in simple terms, you can usually go to the cinema with friends (*costumar ir ao cinema com amigos*), while going alone every now and then, or usually have nightmares (*costumar ter pesadelos*), while sleeping

²¹ Comrie (1976, pp. 27–28): “The feature that is common to all habituais... is that they describe a situation which is characteristic of an extended period of time... The problem of just what constitutes a characteristic feature of an extended period of time, rather than an accidental situation, is conceptual rather than linguistic... [...] ... once we have decided that something constitutes a characteristic situation, we are free to use an explicitly habitual form to describe it, but the decision... is not in itself linguistic.”

²² For Krifka et al. (1995, p. 4), habitual and generic atemporal predications, although close to assertions with universal quantifiers, are distinguished from them by the possibility of admitting exceptions: “characterizing sentences, in general, allow for exceptions, whereas universally quantified sentences make a claim for every object of a certain sort”.

peacefully many nights. The relevance of exceptions is manifest in predications with *costumar*, just like in predications with comparable English habitual markers, as underlined by Krifka et al. (1995) (cf. fn. 6 above). Indeed, the use of *costumar* seems to somehow emphasise the possibility of exceptions. The link between the two is conspicuous: in fact, exceptions are very frequently mentioned after sentences with *costumar*:

- (59) O Paulo **costuma** levar os filhos à escola, {mas / se bem que}
 the Paulo use to.PRES.3SG take.INF the children to.the school but although
 às vezes é a mulher que o faz.
 at.the times be.PRES.3SG the wife that it do.PRES.3SG
 ‘Paulo usually takes his children to school, but sometimes it’s his wife who does it.’
- (60) “**Costuma** ser felino em frente à baliza, mas ontem esteve
 use to.PRES.3SG be.INF feline in front of.the goal but yesterday be.PRF.3SG
 desastrado...”
 clumsy
 ‘He is usually feline in front of the goal, but yesterday he was clumsy.’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext174362-des-98a-2)

How regular patterns are, and how many exceptions are being considered, can be directly signalled through the combination of *costumar* with adverbial quantifiers that I will term here ‘universal and vague frequentatives’: e.g., *sempre* ‘always’ [universal], *muitas vezes* ‘often’, *às vezes* ‘sometimes’, *raramente* ‘rarely’ [vague]. There is a *scale of degrees of frequency*,²³ which can be represented in a simplified manner as follows (cf. comparable scales in Bennett & Partee, 2004 [1978], p. 81, or Quirk et al., 1985, pp. 543–544):

- (61) *costumar*...
sempre ‘always’ > *quase sempre* ‘almost always’ > *normalmente* ‘normally’ >
muitas vezes ‘often’ (*com frequência, frequentemente* ‘frequently’) >
às vezes ‘sometimes’ > *raramente* ‘rarely’

The use of *costumar* without explicit application of these operators can be associated with different positions on this scale, depending on the context and pragmatic factors, or it can simply be vague, i.e., left unspecified.

²³ Geenhoven (2004, p. 155) mentions that adjuncts like *every day* (*daily*), *once a year* (*yearly*), *occasionally*, or *regularly* “differ in meaning in that they express different degrees of frequency”, and considers that “the meaning variety among frequency adverbs is, among other things, related to the variation in length of the hiatus interval that intervenes between the distributed nonoverlapping subintervals”, with the possibility that there are precise fixed values for this hiatus, or not.

When quantifying adverbs other than *sempre* ‘always’ or *nunca* ‘never’ are used, the semantic contribution of *costumar* is null, no difference in interpretation emerging if the verb is omitted. In all cases, the possibility of exceptions is explicitly contemplated.

- (62) “Não ligues! Eu, às vezes, {**esqueço-me** /
NEG pay attention.IMP.2SG I at.the times forget.PRES.1SG + INTR.CLIT
costumo esquecer-me}.
use to.PRES.1SG forget.INF + INTR.CLIT
‘Don’t mind me! I sometimes forget.’
- (63) Eu {**adormeço** / **costumo adormecer**} a ver televisão
I fall asleep.PRES.1SG use to.PRES.1SG fall asleep.INF at watch.INF television
muitas vezes.
many times
‘I often fall asleep watching TV.’
- (64) Eu {**respondo** / **costumo responder**} **quase sempre** aos teus *emails*.”
I answer.PRES.1SG use to.PRES.1SG answer.INF almost always to.the your emails
‘I almost always answer your emails.’

With *sempre* ‘always’ and *nunca* ‘never’, there may be subtle differences, since *costumar* can have the function of emphasising the likelihood of exceptions to the relevant pattern. In the relevant counterparts without *costumar*, exceptions are admissible, but are not emphasised:²⁴

- (65) Eu {**almoço** / **costumo almoçar**} **sempre** ao meio-dia.
I lunch.PRES.1SG use to.PRES.1SG lunch.INF always at.the noon
‘I always have lunch at noon.’
[possibility of exceptions not emphasised without *costumar*]
- (66) Eu **nunca** {**almoço** / **costumo almoçar**} ao meio-dia.
I never lunch.PRES.1SG use to.PRES.1SG lunch.INF at.the noon
‘I never have lunch at noon.’
[possibility of exceptions not emphasised without *costumar*]

5.1.2. Corpus data

Let’s look at each of these combinations in corpora.

²⁴ Note that a sequence like (i) is not necessarily incoherent:

- (i) Eu **almoço sempre** ao meio-dia. É raro não o fazer.
I lunch.PRES.1SG always at.the noon be.INF.3SG rare NEG it do.INF
‘I always have lunch at noon. This is very seldom not the case.’

A. *costumar* + (*quase*) *sempre* ‘(almost) always’

A combination used for repetitions of very high frequency or great regularity, and a minimal number of exceptions; *always* is classified by Quirk et al. (1985, p. 543) as a ‘time-frequency adjunct of universal frequency’.

This is a relatively frequent combination both in newspapers and in literary texts: at least 41 records in CETEMPúblico, 13 in Vercial, 12 in NILC/São Carlos [BP]. The verb *costumar* usually precedes the adverb (*costumar V sempre, costumar sempre*), but also, less frequently, follows it (*sempre costumar*). The sequence *always used to* is also common in English: more than 200 entries in BNC.

- (67) “O príncipe **costumava sempre** andar à caça,
the prince use to.IPRF.3SG always walk.INF to.the hunting
‘the prince always used to go hunting’
e num dia recolheu-se àquela tapada, porque lhe anoiteceu depressa...”
‘and one day he retreated to that hunting ground, because it was getting dark quickly’
(Teófilo Braga, *Contos Tradicionais do Povo Português* [Traditional Tales of the Portuguese People], 1883, in Vercial)
- (68) “... quando... [Marcelo] se levantou para cumprimentar pessoalmente cada um dos convivas...[,]
‘when Marcelo stood up to personally greet each of the guests’
como **sempre costuma** fazer,
as always use to.PRES.3SG do.INF
‘as he always does’
Menezes foi-lhe logo no encalço.”
‘Menezes immediately went after him’
(CETEMPúblico, ext1134161-pol-96b-2)

B. *costumar* + *geralmente, normalmente, por norma* ‘generally, normally’

A combination used for repetitions perceived as having high frequency or great regularity, and a low number of exceptions; *generally* and *normally* are classified by Quirk et al. (1985, p. 543) as ‘time-frequency adjuncts of usual occurrence’ (along with others that I prefer to classify separately, as adjuncts of habituality, like *usually* or *habitually*); these quantifiers are proportional, implying ‘most of the times’, not just a large number of times, unlike those in subgroup C below – cf. the incoherence of *geralmente vou às reuniões do condomínio, mas geralmente falto também* ‘generally I go to the residents meetings, but generally I miss them too’.

These are relatively frequent combinations, at least in newspaper texts: 21 records in CETEMPúblico, 7 in NILC/São Carlos [BP]. In Vercial, I only found 1 example of these combinations. The (continuous) sequences *generally used to* and *normally used to* also occur in English: more than 12 entries of each in BNC.

- (69) “O impacto de uma retraction na carreira de um investigador pode variar,
 ‘the impact of a retraction on a researcher’s career can vary’
 mas **geralmente costuma** ser negativo.”
 but generally use to.PRES.3SG be.INF negative
 ‘but is usually negative’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext331754-soc-92a-1)
- (70) “... os alfacinhas rumaram ontem às zonas
 ‘alfacinhas (Lisboans) headed out yesterday to the areas’
 que **costumam normalmente** frequentar.”
 that use to.PRES.3PL normally frequent.INF
 ‘they usually frequent’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext317940-soc-98a-1)
- (71) “A deslocação... a Setúbal domina as atenções..., dadas as dificuldades
 ‘the trip to Setúbal has been the centre of attention, given the difficulties
 que, **por norma**, os sadinos **costumam** colocar aos seus
 that by norm the sadinos (Setúbal players) use to.PRES.3PL pose.INF to.the their
 adversários.”
 opponents
 ‘that the local football club usually creates for its opponents’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext1972-des-91b-2)

The combinations with *a maioria das vezes* and *a maior parte das vezes* ‘most of the times’ are very rare, although grammatically well-formed. There are no records in CETEMPúblico, Vercial or NILC/São Carlos, but there are 3 records (with a *maioria das vezes*) in the 900 million word Corpus Brasileiro, at Linguateca:

- (72) “Chegou a ser titular em algumas oportunidades,
 ‘he was a starter on a few occasions’
 mas **costumava** ser reserva **na maioria das vezes.**”
 but use to.IPRF.3SG be.INF substitute in.the majority of.the times
 ‘but most of the times he was a substitute’
 (Corpus Brasileiro)

C. *costumar* + *muitas/bastantes vezes, frequentemente/com frequência* ‘often, frequently’

A combination used, like the one in B, for repetitions perceived as having high frequency or great regularity, and a low number of exceptions; *often* and *frequently* are classified by Quirk et al. (1985, p. 543) as ‘time-frequency adjuncts of high frequency’; these quantifiers do not imply ‘most of the time’, unlike those in B – cf. the total coherence of *muitas vezes vou às reuniões do condomínio, mas muitas vezes falto também* ‘I often go to the residents meetings, but I often skip them too’.

These are relatively common combinations in newspapers and in literary texts: at least 34 records (8 with *muitas/bastantes vezes*, 26 with *frequentemente/com frequência*) in CETEMPúblico; 8 records (all with *muitas/bastantes vezes*) in Vercial; 11 records (all with *frequentemente/com frequência*) in NILC/São Carlos [BP]. There are no records of *costumar frequentemente/com frequência* in the literary corpus Vercial, but this is a relatively common combination in Portuguese and Brazilian newspapers. The (continuous) sequence *often used to* is also common in English: more than 130 entries in BNC.

- (73) “O Tomasinho... exigira que ninguém lhe entrasse no quarto,
 ‘Tomasinho had demanded that no one enter his room’
 por causa de uma intensa dor de cabeça,
 ‘because of an intense headache’
 que lhe **costumava** dar **muitas vezes.**”
 that him.DAT use to.IPRF.3SG give.INF many times
 ‘he often had’
 (Júlio Dinis, *As Apreensões de uma Mãe* [A Mother’s Apreensions], 1870, in Vercial)

- (74) “Ainda há três meses as pessoas das duas aldeias
 ‘just three months ago people from the two villages’
costumavam visitar-se **com frequência.**”
 use to.IPRF.3PL visit.INF + RECP.CLIT. with frequency
 ‘used to visit each other frequently’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext1049276-pol-92b-1)

In this group, we should also consider the combination of *costumar* with *muito* and *bastante*, as verbal quantifiers equivalent to *muitas/bastantes vezes* (‘a lot’, in English), as in (75). This combination seems relatively frequent, but I did not count the number of records in the various corpora consulted.

- (75) “Eriksson não **costuma** optar **muito...** por esquemas defensivos.”
 Eriksson NEG use to.PRES.3SG opt.INF much for schemes defensive
 ‘Eriksson doesn’t often opt for defensive schemes.’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext1328407-nd-91a-2)

D. *costumar* + *às/por vezes*, *algumas vezes* ‘sometimes’

Combination used for repetitions perceived as having low frequency, or nearly no regularity, and a high number of exceptions; *occasionally* is classified by Quirk et al. (1985, p. 543) as a ‘time-frequency adjunct of low frequency’ (together with the counterparts of the expressions in subgroup E below, and with negative adverbs such as *never*).

These are moderately frequent combinations in newspapers and in literary texts: at least 9 records in CETEMPúblico, 11 in Vercial, 5 in NILC/São Carlos [BP]. It seems to be a rhetorical way of toning down the habitual meaning of *costumar*, indicating, almost contradictorily,

sporadic actions. The (continuous) sequence *sometimes used to* also occurs in English: more than 40 entries in BNC.

- (76) “O espírito faccioso das oposições na Parvónia,
 ‘the factious spirit of the Opposition in Parvonia’
costuma às vezes assacar calúnias desta natureza ao governo.”
 use to.PRES.3SG at.the times impute.INF slanders of.this nature to.the Government
 ‘sometimes impute slanders of this nature to the Government’
 (Guerra Junqueiro, *Viagem à Roda da Parvónia* [Trip Around Parvonia], 1879, in Vercial)
- (77) “Os sindicatos... **costumavam por vezes** causar sérios problemas à
 the unions use to.IPRF.3PL by times cause.INF serious problems to.the
 liderança partidária...”
 party leadership
 ‘The trade unions sometimes caused serious problems for the party leadership.’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext993112-pol-98b-1)

The following expressions are of a similar type: *de vez em quando* ‘every now and then’, *uma vez por outra/de tempos a tempos* ‘once in a while’, *esporadicamente* ‘sporadically’, *ocasionalmente* ‘occasionally’, and, only in BP, *vira e mexe* [turn.PRES.3SG and move.PRES.3SG] ‘every now and then’. Two of them have records in CETEMPúblico: *costumar de vez em quando* (5 records), *costumar de tempos a tempos* (1 record). None of them occurs in Vercial, or in NILC/São Carlos.

- (78) “É também proprietário do Café Diana, perto da casa da falecida Princesa...
 ‘He also owns Café Diana, near the late Princess’s house.’
 Ela **costumava** aparecer **de vez em quando**
 she use to.IPRF.3SG pop in.INF from time to when
 ‘she used to pop in from time to time’
 para tomar café e conversar.”
 ‘for coffee and a chat’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext1187790-pol-98a-2)
- (79) “De acordo com um responsável da GNR da Sertã,
 ‘according to a GNR official in Sertã’
 o detido **costumava** ficar **de tempos a tempos** em casa dos pais,...
 the detainee use to.IPRF.3SG stay.INF from times to times at home of.the parents
 ‘the detainee used to stay at his parents’ house from time to time’
 apesar de trabalhar na zona de Lisboa.”
 ‘despite working in the Lisbon area’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext1468181-soc-98b-2)

E. *costumar* + *raramente* ‘rarely’

A combination used for repetitions perceived as having very low frequency, or no regularity, and a very high number of exceptions; *seldom* and *rarely* are classified by Quirk et al. (1985, p. 543) as ‘time-frequency adjuncts of low frequency’ (together with those presented above in subgroup D, and with negative adverbs such as *never*).

This combination is extremely infrequent. In CETEMPúblico, there is only 1 record. Vercial and NILC/São Carlos have no records. In English *rarely used to* also seems very infrequent: no records of this sequence in BNC, but a few examples can be found in other corpora.²⁵

- (80) “Mais estranho ainda é o facto de o fenómeno se ter propagado de Espanha,...
 ‘even stranger is the fact that the phenomenon has spread from Spain’
 onde Juan Luis já é artista de topo há bastante tempo.
 ‘where Juan Luis has been a top artist for a long time’
 É que os gostos nacionais **raramente costumam** reflectir
 be.PRES.3G that the tastes national rarely use to.PRES.3PL reflect.INF
 os dos nossos vizinhos.”
 the of.the our neighbours
 ‘Our national tastes rarely reflect those of our neighbours.’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext34337-nd-91b-1)

The combination *costumar raramente* is somewhat contradictory. The most common way to say that a situation rarely happens is to deny that it is a habit, using the negative form *não costumar*, or to use *raramente* ‘rarely’ in an affirmative sentence without *costumar*. Thus (80) could be rephrased (and perhaps sound more natural) as: *os gostos nacionais não costumam refletir* [NEG use to.PRES.3PL reflect.INF] *os dos nossos vizinhos*, or *raramente acontece* [rarely happen.PRES.3SG] *os gostos nacionais refletirem* [reflect.INF.3PL] *os dos nossos vizinhos*.

The negation of habits is an interesting grammatical topic in itself. Quirk et al. (1985, p. 140) and Huddleston (2002, p. 115) comment on the sequence *never used to* in English, which they consider to be just an informal way of avoiding the combinations of *used to* with *not* (viz., *usedn’t*, *usen’t*, *used not*, *didn’t use*), which rarely occur.²⁶ The contiguous sequences *never used to*, *never*

²⁵ Cf. the following two examples from *The New York Times* (ex <https://app.ludwig.guru/>): “That **rarely used to** happen in Lambeau Field.”; “**I rarely used to** put myself in jeopardy of any sort’, Dr. Hilfer said.”.

²⁶ Quirk et al. (1985, p. 140): “There is a tendency for speakers to avoid the problem of negating *used to* by employing the negative adverb *never*: *I never used to watch television*.” Huddleston (2002, p. 115): “Choice between the negative variants is sometimes avoided in informal style by using *never*: *He never used to like it*. The version with analytic negation, *He used not to like it*, can be construed either as an auxiliary with primary verb negation, or else as a lexical verb with negation of the non-finite complement.” *Never* is classified by Quirk et al. (1985, p. 543) as a “time-frequency adjunct of low frequency” (just like the quantifiers in groups D and E above).

usually, and *usually never* have 138, 8 and 6 records in BNC, respectively. In Portuguese, the sequence *não costumar* is not avoided at all; on the contrary, it is very frequent. However, *nunca costumar* is also used, although much less frequently than *não costumar*, as we'll see below. *Nunca costumar* and *não costumar* seem to be just free variants, apparently with no differences in truth conditions (at most, the rareness of the exceptions is slightly more reinforced with *nunca* than with *não*).

- (81) Eu {**não** / **nunca**} **costumo** tomar o pequeno-almoço na cama.
 I NEG never use to.PRES.1SG take.INF the breakfast in.the bed
 'I {don't usually / never usually} have breakfast in bed.'

Note that the adverb *quase* 'almost' can be used to emphasise the possibility of exceptions to a negative habit: *eu quase nunca costumo tomar o pequeno almoço na cama* 'I almost never have breakfast in bed'. When *costumar* is used, *quase* can only combine with *nunca* (*quase nunca costumar* [almost never use to_{INF}]); the combination *quase não costumar* [almost NEG use to_{INF}] is rather odd.

The combination *costumar* + *nunca* is infrequent. There are only 4 records in CETEMPúblico, and 1 in Vercial. As for BP, there are no records in NILC/São Carlos, and only 2 records in the 900 million word Corpus Brasileiro.

- (82) “E tu próprio... **Nunca** **costumas** sair de manhã... sobretudo aos
 and you self never use to.PRES.2SG leave.INF of morning especially on.the
 domingos...”
 Sundays

'And you, yourself... You never go out in the morning... especially on Sundays...'
 (Mário de Sá-Carneiro, *A Confissão de Lúcio* [Lúcio's Confession], 1913, in Vercial)

- (83) “As razões pelas quais Cavaco Silva resolveu contar o episódio não são inteiramente claras,
 'the reasons why Cavaco Silva decided to tell the story are not entirely clear'

mas ele **nunca** **costuma** fazer nada por acaso.”
 but he never use to.PRES.3SG do.INF nothing by chance
 'but he never does anything by accident'

(CETEMPúblico, ext964883-pol-93b-1)

- (84) “Senhor presidente, **nunca** **costumo** recorrer à... defesa da honra
 Mr president never use to.PRES.1SG resort.INF to.the defence of.the honour
 'Mr President, I never use the rules of procedure to defend my honour'

e é esta a primeira vez que o faço...”
 'and this is the first time I have done so'
 (CETEMPúblico, ext1310900-pol-94a-1)

5.2. *Costumar* and universally quantified temporal adjuncts, adjuncts of frequency *sensu stricto* and adjuncts of cyclicity

5.2.1. General issues

Let us observe the sentences below, all with two variants: one with the simple so-called ‘habitual present’ (*sai*_{PRES}), and one with the verb *costumar* in the present tense (*costuma*_{PRES} *sair*_{INF}). The first two possible continuations (*a* and *b*) include universally quantified temporal adjuncts (UNIV), with nominal quantifiers in *a*, and adverbial quantifiers over eventualities in *b*;²⁷ the last two (*c* and *d*) include adjuncts of frequency *sensu stricto* (FREQ) in *c*, and adjuncts of cyclicity (CYCL) in *d*.

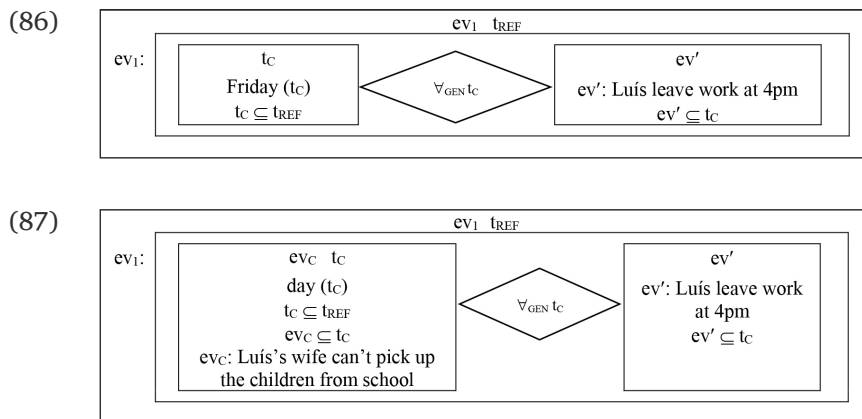
- (85) O Luís {*sai* / **costuma** *sair*} do trabalho às 16h...
 the Luís leave.PRES.3SG use to.PRES.3SG leave.INF of.the work at.the 4pm
 ‘Luís (usually) leaves work at 4pm’
- (a) ...[todas as sextas-feiras]_{UNIV}
 all the Fridays
 ‘every Friday’
- (b) ...[sempre que a mulher não pode ir buscar as crianças
 whenever the wife NEG can.PRES.3SG go.INF pick up.INF the children
 à escola]_{UNIV}
 from.the school
 ‘whenever his wife can’t pick up the children from school’
- (c) ...[duas vezes por semana]_{FREQ}
 two times per week
 ‘twice a week’
- (d) ...[de quinze em quinze dias]_{CYCL}
 from fifteen in fifteen days
 ‘every fortnight’

As we can see, the variants with the simple present (*sai*_{PRES}) and with *costumar* (*costuma*_{PRES} *sair*_{INF}) are virtually equivalent. Krifka et al. (1995) assume, for English, that, in constructions with and without *usually*, the adverb emphasises the possibility of considering exceptions, a possibility that also exists, but is maybe not so prominent in sentences without it. I think we can

²⁷ As Krifka et al. (1995, p. 25) mention, operators involving tripartite structures with a restrictor and a nuclear scope – comparable to the genericity operator – were proposed in order to tackle sentences with *when* (equivalent to *sempre que* ‘whenever’, and *quando* ‘when’), such as *John smokes when he comes home*, as well as conditional sentences – cf. Lewis (1975), Kamp (1981), Heim (1982), and several other authors later. Krifka et al. (1995) also consider that a similar treatment should be used for “adverbs such as *always*, *often*, *seldom*, and the like” (discussed in the previous subsection, 5.1).

make a similar analysis here: the verb *costumar* clearly underscores the possibility of exceptions, which may not be so prominent in sentences without *costumar*, and in this sense represents a ‘weaker generalisation’. It is worth pointing out that the semantic values the adjuncts explicitly introduce in the sentences above – viz., universal quantification (including correlation between eventualities), frequency sensu stricto and cyclicity – are clearly akin to habituality. What is intriguing is that the verb *costumar* – which is a prototypical marker of habituality – can appear in these predications, apparently with minimal contribution, signalling that the repeated action at stake is regarded as a habit.

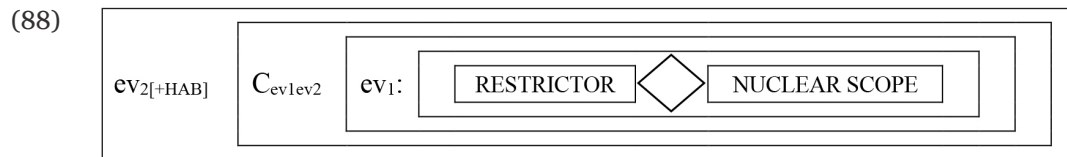
Let us first look at the case of universally quantified temporal adjuncts. The formal treatment of these structures has been done using tripartite conditions similar to those used for the habituality marker (cf. discussion in 1.1). In the logical language of Discourse Representation Theory (Kamp & Reyle, 1993), we could represent sentences (85a) and (85b) in the following manner (using, for simplicity, the symbol ‘ \forall_{GEN} ’ to represent a generic operator, with ‘quasi-universal’ force, allowing for exceptions).



In these discourse representation structures [DRSs]: ev' represents the iterated episodic eventuality at the base of the frequentative/habitual predication (hence appearing in the nuclear scope); t_c and ev_c represent the relevant interval or eventuality identified via the temporal adjunct (hence appearing in the restrictor); t_{REF} represents the (typically long) reference interval for which universal quantification is valid (hence appearing in the matrix DRS);²⁸ ev_1 represents the complex non-atomic (often, but not always imperfective) eventuality of ‘doing something in all intervals or in association with all eventualities of a given type’.

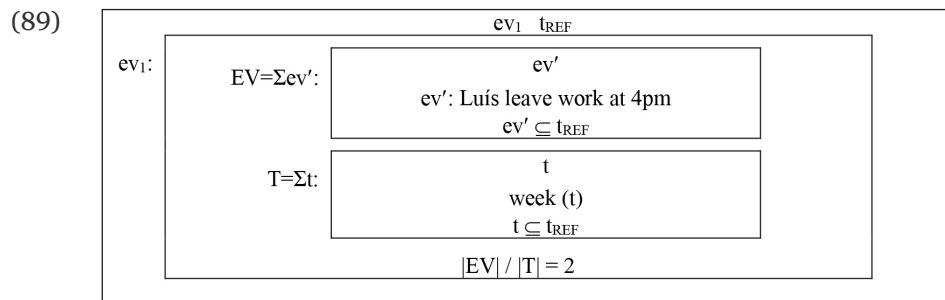
²⁸ Often, as in the examples above, the reference interval (t_{REF}) is not specified. But it can be specified via certain adjuncts, as we have already seen in section 2.1: e.g., *o Paulo sai do trabalho às 16h todas as sextas-feiras [desde janeiro]* t_{REF} ‘Paulo has been leaving work at 4pm every Friday since January’. Generally, the condition [$t_{\text{REF}} = \text{loc}(ev_1)$] applies.

Non-episodic predications of this type are easily ‘reinterpreted’ as habits, especially if associated with overlapping tenses (*sai_{PRES}*, *saía_{IPRF}*), which are the most common in these contexts.²⁹ This can be represented in a simplified manner, as follows, adapting the Aktionsart shift operator C (‘coercion operator’) from Swart (1998, p. 360ff.):

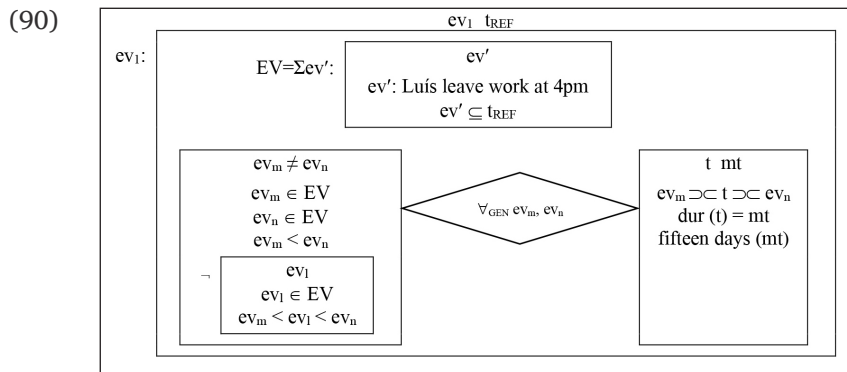


With this ‘reinterpretation’, or ‘reanalysis’, t_{REF} is regarded as the interval where a habit holds (t_{HAB}) and the verb *costumar* – which is prototypical of habitual predications – easily emerges, without significant changes in the truth conditions. It should be noted, marginally, that *costumar* is combined with the verb of the predication represented in the nuclear scope (ev'), which is deeply embedded in the structure, a fact that can pose a challenge to the algorithm for constructing discourse representations (DRSs) that I will not discuss here.

Let us now consider sentences with frequency adjuncts *sensu stricto*, and with cyclicity adjuncts, such as (85c) and (85d), respectively, for which I am not aware of any detailed representation proposals in Discourse Representation Theory (except Mória, 2004). I suggest the following representations:



²⁹ The same is not the case for sentences with tenses expressing anteriority to TPpt (*saiu_{PRF}*), which symptomatically do not have counterparts with *costumar* – cf. *o Luís saiu do trabalho às 16h todas as sextas-feiras do passado mês de março* ‘Luís left work at 4pm every Friday in March’. Cf. Ferreira (2016, 371ff.) for a discussion of this issue. His ‘imperfective operator’ (Imp) having scope over the ‘always VP’ component of the structure (cf. his tree in p. 373) is comparable to the effect of the C operator in these DRS-representations.



In order to represent frequency sensu stricto, I propose (89), slightly modifying Mória (2004).³⁰ As a matter of fact, the relevant constructions express a ratio between a number of occurrences of a given situation (ev' , in this case eventualities of Luís leaving work at 4pm) and a number of time units (t , in this case weeks), in both cases included in the reference interval (t_{REF}). Crucially, it may happen that this number is not an integer, as in the sentences (91) and (92). Hence, I think this is the most suitable formal representation, as the division $|EV|/|T|$ is able to generate non-integer numbers (3.6 or 2.8, in the following examples).

(91) Cada utente do SNS recorre (em média) **3,6 vezes por ano**
 each user of.the NHS resort.PRES.3SG on average 3.6 times per year
 às urgências.
 to.the emergency room
 '(on average) each user of the NHS comes to the emergency room 3.6 times a year'

(92) Nesta perigosa cidade da América Latina, são assassinadas em
 in.this dangerous city of.the America Latin be.PRES.3PL murder.PTCP on
 média **2,8 pessoas por dia.**
 average 2.8 people per Day
 '2.8 people are murdered on average every day in this dangerous Latin American city'

In order to represent cyclicity, or repetition with a certain regular hiatus between singular occurrences, I propose the representation in (90). A generic universal quantifier \forall_{GEN} (which admits exceptions) quantifies the size of the interval (t) intervening between any two consecutive instances (ev_m, ev_n) of the episodic eventualities on which the predication is based (Luís leaving work at 4pm, here).

³⁰ In Mória (2004, pp. 590–591), sentences with frequency adjuncts sensu stricto (n vezes por TIME UNIT 'n times per TIME UNIT') are studied in detail, and a representation using a combination of tripartite conditions and sums is proposed. However, a representation using only sums (as I propose here) seems more appropriate, given the facts mentioned above.

It should be noted, marginally, that frequency *sensu stricto* and cyclicity are not exactly identical grammatical subsystems, although they are undoubtedly very similar (and in many contexts, in interaction with pragmatic factors, the relevant differences can even be neutralised). Crucially, from a sentence that expresses cyclicity a frequency *stricto sensu* value can normally be inferred, but the reverse isn't necessarily true: *o Paulo visita os pais de oito em oito dias* 'Paulo visits his parents every eight days' entails *o Paulo visita os pais quatro vezes por mês* 'Paulo visits his parents four times a month', but *o Paulo visita os pais quatro vezes por mês* 'Paulo visits his parents four times a month' does not necessarily entail *o Paulo visita os pais de oito em oito dias* 'Paulo visits his parents every eight days', since the visits need not be regularly spaced out.

Non-episodic predications of these two related subtypes, frequency *sensu stricto* and cyclicity, with tenses expressing overlap with the TPpt (*sai*_{PRES}, *saía*_{IPRF}), are also easily 'reinterpreted' as habits, in the terms of (88), *mutatis mutandis*, and the verb *costumar* – prototypical of habitual predications – also easily emerges there, with no significant changes in the truth conditions.

5.2.2. Corpus data

Constructions with universally quantified temporal adjuncts and *costumar* are very frequent, especially with *todos os N* 'every' and *quando* 'when' equivalent to *sempre que* 'whenever'. Observe two examples from the Vercial corpus, in (93) and (94). They have parallel counterparts in English, e.g., with *used to every N*, or *used to when(ever)*.³¹

- (93) “**Costumava** a devota donzela ir **todas as noites**
 use to.IPRF.3SG the devout maiden go.INF all the nights
 ‘the devout maiden used to go every night’
 a uma oculta lapa que jazia no fim da cerca...”
 ‘to a hidden cave that lay at the end of the fence’
 (Almeida Garrett, *Viagens na Minha Terra* [Travels in my Homeland], 1846, in Vercial)

- (94) “Era nessa chaise-longue
 ‘it was on that chaise longue’
 que ela se **costumava** sentar **quando** iam ver o sogro.”
 that she INTR.CLIT. use to.IPRF.3SG sit.INF when go.IPRF.3PL see.INF the father-in-law
 ‘that she used to sit when they visited her father-in-law’
 (Eça de Queirós, *Alves e Companhia* [Alves and Company], 1925, in Vercial)

³¹ Cf. the following three examples from the British National Corpus: “a special train **used to** leave Baden early **every morning**” [FTU]; “I **used to** go **whenever** I could, very often alone” [B3F]; “we **used to** salute **when** they played” [JK2].

Systematic searches were conducted only for constructions with *sempre que* ‘whenever’: 22 records in CETEMPúblico, 2 records in Vercial (for comparison purposes, in Vercial there are 20 records of *costumar* + *quando* of the relevant type); only 1 record in NILC/São Carlos [BP], the equivalent combination *costumar* + *quando* being far more common in that BP corpus.

- (95) “Àquela imagem **costumava** encomendar a filha, **sempre que**
 to.that image use to.IPRF.3SG entrust.INF the daughter whenever
 saía da aldeia
 go out.IPRF.3SG of.the village
 ‘he used to entrust his daughter to that image whenever he left the village’
 e no regresso pagava-lhe em fervorosas orações...”
 ‘and on his return he paid for it in fervent prayer’
 (Júlio Dinis, *A Morgadinha dos Canaviais* [*The Firstborn Heiress of the Sugarcane Fields*], 1868, in Vercial)

All the other habitual predicative expressions seem to combine well with these adjuncts. Observe, for instance, the following construction with *ser habitual* ‘be usual’:

- (96) “A ocorrência,
 ‘the incident’
 como é **habitual sempre que** eclodem fogos... com origem
 as be.PRES.3SG usual whenever break out.PRES.3PL fires with origin
 desconhecida,
 unknown
 ‘as is usual whenever fires of unknown origin break out’
 foi participada à Polícia Judiciária...”
 ‘was reported to the Polícia Judiciária’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext1081336-soc-92b-1)

Combinations of *costumar* with adjuncts of frequency *sensu stricto* and adjuncts of cyclicity are apparently not very frequent, but they do occur. Systematic searches were conducted for just a few expressions, for illustrative purposes: *n vez(es) por* TIME UNIT ‘*n* times per TIME UNIT’, *a cada n* TIME UNITS ‘every *n* TIME UNITS’, *de n em n* TIME UNITS ‘every *n* TIME UNITS’, *dia sim dia não* ‘every other day’. In CETEMPúblico, only 7 records were found: 6 with *n vez(es) por* TIME UNIT, and 1 with *dia sim dia não*. In Vercial, no record of these combinations was found. In NILC/São Carlos [BP], there are 5 records, all with *n vez(es) por* TIME UNIT. In English, similar combinations also occur.³²

³² Cf. the following two examples from the British National Corpus: “You **used to** come **once a week** for dinner” [KD8]; “Recruitment advertisements (...) **used to** appear **every few weeks** in (...) the national press.” [EUU].

- (97) “O único parente que tinha era um irmão...
 ‘the only relative he had was a brother’
 Dantes, **costumava** vir visitá-lo **duas ou três vezes**
 before use to.IPRF.3SG come.INF visit.INF + him.ACC two or three times
por mês.”
 per month
 ‘he used to visit him two or three times a month’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext1141379-pol-96a-1)

All the other habitual predicative expressions seem to combine well with these adjuncts. Observe, for instance, the following construction with *ter o hábito* ‘be in the habit’:

- (98) “O gabinete só o contacta em caso de ‘urgência’,
 ‘the cabinet only contacts him in case of an emergency’
 mas o ministro **tem** o **hábito** de falar **«mais ou menos de**
 but the minister have.PRES.3SG the habit of speak.INF more or less from
dois em dois dias.”
 two to two days
 ‘but the minister is in the habit of speaking more or less every two days’
 (CETEMPúblico, ext1522114-pol-92b-2)

6. Conclusion

Habitual predications are a class of non-episodic predications of crucial importance in the grammar of natural languages such as Portuguese and English. This is reflected in the frequency with which they appear, and the diversity of specific means used to encode them. Among these means, the auxiliary verb *costumar* undoubtedly stands out in Portuguese, with almost 7,200 records in the 200 million word EP corpus CETEMPúblico, 2,400 records in the 34 million word BP corpus NILC/São Carlos, and approx. 950 records in the 14 million word literary EP corpus Vercial.

Some grammatical peculiarities of *costumar* were analysed here. In terms of verb inflection, the polyvalence of imperfective past forms of this verb and its (near-)rejection of perfective past and pluperfect forms stand out. The polyvalence – forms like *costumava* can be deictic or anaphoric, and can express both overlap with and anteriority to temporal perspective points – is shared with other constructions signalling habituality, and runs contrary to the general rule for imperfective pasts. The (near-)rejection, however, is somehow unique. In terms of co-occurrence with adjuncts, we observed the possibility – somewhat marginal and seldom used by Portuguese speakers – of signalling habituality in a redundant way by directly combining *costumar* with adjuncts like *habitualmente* ‘usually’. We also observed the (often explored) possibility of

combining *costumar* with frequentative adjuncts (in a broad sense of the term); these include both adjuncts that indicate the ‘force of the habit’ (e. g. *costumar sempre* ‘always’ vs. *costumar às vezes* ‘sometimes’), and those that express universal temporal quantification (including correlation between eventualities), frequency sensu stricto sensu or cyclicity (e.g. *costumar todas as sextas-feiras* ‘every Friday’, *costumar sempre que está bom tempo* ‘whenever the weather is good’, *costumar três vezes por semana* ‘three times a week’, *costumar de três em três dias* ‘every three days’). Some of these combinations also seem to be relatively common in English, which was pervasively taken into account in this work, but I will leave a more systematic contrastive analysis between the two languages for further research.

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Competing Interests

The author declares that he has no competing interests.

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Corpora

[BNC] British National Corpus, available at <https://www.english-corpora.org/bnc/>

[CETEMPúblico] Corpus CETEMPúblico 1.7 v. 11.5, available at <http://www.linguateca.pt/ACDC/>

[Corpus Brasileiro] Corpus brasileiro v. 7.0, available at <http://www.linguateca.pt/ACDC/>

[NILC/São Carlos] Corpus NILC/São Carlos v. 13.4, available at <http://www.linguateca.pt/ACDC/>

[Vercial] Corpus Vercial v. 15.1, available at <http://www.linguateca.pt/ACDC/>

