

# A NOTE ON LEXICAL RECIPROCITY IN BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE\*

GIADA PALMIERI <sup>◇</sup>

RENATO MIGUEL BASSO <sup>†</sup>

MANUELA PINTO <sup>◇</sup>

YOAD WINTER <sup>◇</sup>

JOOST ZWARTS <sup>◇</sup>

<sup>◇</sup>*Utrecht University*

<sup>†</sup>*Universidade Federal de São Carlos*

## 1 Introduction

In the past decades, extensive research has focused on the way in which languages express reciprocal configurations (Dalrymple et al., 1998; Nedjalkov, 2007; König & Gast, 2008, a.o.). As for verbal reciprocals, two strategies are available cross-linguistically. One strategy, *grammatical reciprocity*, consists in the use of a grammatical element, like a reciprocal pronoun, to generate a mutual configuration from any transitive verb, as shown by the English example in (1). On the other hand, there are verbs that convey a reciprocal interpretation using their intransitive entry: this is the case for verbs that undergo the reciprocal alternation (Levin, 1993), also referred to as *lexical reciprocals*. These verbs constitute a restricted class, which typological works characterize as rather stable cross-linguistically (Haspelmath, 2007).

(1) Irene and Sara hugged/ kissed/ thanked/ punished each other

(2) Irene and Sara hugged/ kissed/ \*thanked/ \*punished

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English makes an overt distinction between grammatical and lexical reciprocal forms, and parallel surface distinctions are available in other languages, such as Hebrew, Dutch and Arabic (Reinhart & Siloni, 2005). However, the identification of lexical reciprocal predicates is not straightforward in a number of languages. In Romance, for instance, only one reciprocal form is generally available in finite clauses, where the presence of the clitic *si/se* (in its various forms) allows a reciprocal interpretation with any transitive verb (3). Note that the same construction also gives rise to a reflexive interpretation, but this will not be included in our discussion.<sup>1</sup>

- (3) a. Irene e Sara si abbracciano/ puniscono *Italian*  
 b. Irene y Sara se abrazan/ castigan *Spanish*  
 c. Irene et Sara s' embrassent/ punissent *French*  
 Irene and Sara SI hug.PRES.3P punish PRES.3P  
 i. 'Irene and Sara hug/punish each other'  
 ii. 'Irene and Sara hug/punish themselves'

Despite the existence of only one surface reciprocal form, it has been shown that verbs with lexical reciprocal entries do exist in Romance languages. Through systematic tests, it is possible to identify a group of verbs that show the same semantic and morpho-syntactic properties that characterize lexical reciprocals cross-linguistically (*see* Palmieri et al. 2018 on lexical reciprocals in Italian, and Doron & Rappaport Hovav 2009 on lexical reflexives in French).

In most Romance languages, the clitic *si/se* is obligatory in all simple reciprocal sentences. However, Brazilian Portuguese (henceforth BrP) represents an exceptional case: for some verbs in this language, reciprocal interpretations are available with or without *se* (4a). Most verbs, nonetheless, do require *se* (4b), similarly to the conventional Romance pattern in (3).

- (4) a. Irene e Sara (se) abraçaram/ beijaram  
 Irene and Sara SI hug.PAST.3P kiss.PAST.3P  
 'Irene and Sara hugged/kissed (each other)'  
 b. Irene e Sara \*(se) puniram/ agradeceram  
 Irene and Sara SI punish.PAST.3P thank.PAST.3P  
 'Irene and Sara punished/thanked each other'

The distribution of *se* in BrP is intriguing, not only because of the surprising difference from other Romance languages, but also because of the resemblance to languages like English, where verbs like *hug* and *kiss* give rise to a reciprocal interpretation in their intransitive entry. We hypothesize that BrP verbs that support reciprocal interpretations without *se* have a lexical reciprocal entry. To examine this hypothesis, we will look at semantic properties that have been cross-linguistically associated with lexical reciprocity, and used to identify verbs with a lexical reciprocal entry in Italian (Palmieri et al. 2018). Subsequently, we will investigate to what extent the meanings of reciprocal verbs identified in BrP correspond to those of the Italian verbs that we identified in Palmieri et al. (2018).

We propose that the BrP verbs that allow the omission of *se* in finite clauses have a lexical reciprocal entry, as they show semantic properties that are cross-linguistically associated with lexical reciprocity: (i) they can appear in the discontinuous reciprocal construction and (ii) allow

<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations used in this paper: PRES = present tense; INF = infinitive; AUX = auxiliary; PP = past participle; PAST = simple past tense; 1S = 1st person singular; 3S = 3rd person singular; 3P = 3rd person plural; SI = clitic *si/se*.

a reciprocal interpretation with singular group NPs. A comparison with Italian will reveal a great correspondence between the lexical reciprocals in these two languages. Furthermore, we propose that semantically, Italian and BrP do not differ in the way they encode reciprocal meanings, despite the evident difference in finite clauses. We propose that the omission of *se* in BrP finite clauses is parallel to the omission of *si* in Italian non-finite complemental clauses, which does not prevent lexical reciprocal verbs from conveying a reciprocal interpretation (Palmieri et al. 2018). We conclude that Italian and BrP have different syntactic parameters regulating the obligatory use of *si/se* in finite clauses, but that this element cannot be considered as the source of lexical reciprocity in either of these languages.

The paper is structured as follows. In §2 we focus on the identification of lexical reciprocity in BrP: we illustrate which verbs generate a reciprocal interpretation without *se*, and spell out semantic properties that characterize these verbs, analogously to lexical reciprocals in other languages. In §3 we will compare the class of lexical reciprocal verbs in BrP to those of Italian, unveiling a strong correspondence between the concepts that are lexicalized as reciprocal in the two languages. In §4 we will briefly discuss grammatical reciprocity in BrP. In §5 we provide general conclusions.

## 2 Lexical Reciprocity in BrP

In the rich literature on the Romance clitic *si/se*, it has often been proposed that this element cannot be analyzed as a pronoun: across Romance languages there are verbs with lexical entries where the reflexive or reciprocal meaning resides in the verb root (Labelle 2008; Doron & Rappaport Hovav 2009; Palmieri et al. 2018). It has been proposed that with such verbs, *si/se* does not contribute to the reciprocal interpretation, but functions as a marker whose obligatory presence is to be analyzed in terms of syntactic requirements. Evidence in favor of this account comes from constructions where *si/se* is disallowed but reflexive/reciprocal meanings are still available with a restricted number of verbs. Doron & Rappaport Hovav (2009) showed that some French verbs, if embedded in a causative construction where *se* is not allowed for independent reasons, would nonetheless allow a reflexive interpretation. A parallel behavior has been observed in Italian lexical reciprocals (Palmieri et al. 2018): verbs like *abbracciare* ‘to hug’ and *baciare* ‘to kiss’ obligatorily require *si* in finite clauses (5a). However, in causative clauses (5b), these verbs are distinguished from other transitive verbs in supporting reciprocal interpretations without any grammatical marking.

- (5) a. Irene e Sara si abbracciano/ baciano  
 Irene and Sara SI hug.PRES.3P kiss.PRES.3P  
 ‘Irene and Sara hug/kiss (each other)’  
 b. Ho fatto (\*si) abbracciare / baciare Irene e Sara  
 have.AUX.1SG make.PP SI hug.INF kiss.INF Irene and Sara  
 ‘I caused Irene and Sara to hug/kiss’

Along these lines, it seems plausible that Romance languages systematically express reciprocal meanings similar to ‘hug’ and ‘kiss’ without *si/se*. Moreover, if the analysis of *si/se* as a marker is on the right track, and its obligatory use in finite clauses is linked to reasons that are external to the semantics of lexical reciprocals, the omission of *si/se* could in principle also be possible in

constructions other than causatives. We propose that this is the case with finite clauses in BrP, where *se* can be omitted with lexically reciprocal verbs. In order to provide support for this proposal, let us start by illustrating the distribution of *se* in BrP.

## 2.1 Reciprocal Meanings without *se*

In BrP, the presence of *se* is not always a precondition for a reciprocal interpretation in finite clauses. The possibility to omit *se* depends on the verb. In most cases, *se* is required when describing a reflexive or reciprocal situation, hence omitting this element results in ungrammaticality (6). However, there are verbs that disallow *se*, yet get a reciprocal interpretation without it (7a), and verbs for which the presence of *se* is optional in reciprocal sentences (7b-c). When sentences with these latter verbs omit *se*, they only receive a reciprocal interpretation, ruling out the reflexive reading.<sup>2</sup>

- (6) Irene e Sara \*(*se*) puniram/ agradeceram  
 Irene and Sara SI punish.PAST.3P thank.PAST.3P  
 i. ‘Irene and Sara punished/thanked each other’  
 ii. ‘Irene and Sara punished/thanked themselves’
- (7) a. Irene e Sara (\**se*) discutiram/ colaboraram  
 Irene and Sara SI discuss.PAST.3P collaborate.PAST.3P  
 ‘Irene and Sara discussed/collaborated’  
 b. Irene e Sara *se* abraçaram/ beijaram  
 Irene and Sara SI hug.PAST.3P kiss.PAST.3P  
 i. ‘Irene and Sara hugged/kissed each other’  
 ii. ‘Irene and Sara hugged/kissed themselves’  
 c. Irene e Sara abraçaram/ beijaram  
 Irene and Sara hug.PAST.3P kiss.PAST.3P  
 ‘Irene and Sara hugged/kissed each other’

While the behavior in (6) is similar with most transitive verbs, the obligatory or optional omission of *se* is a characteristic of a limited number of verbs, displayed respectively in Table 1 and 2.

<sup>2</sup> There are also verbs that can optionally omit *se* and generate a reflexive interpretation (i)-(ii). We assume that these verbs have a lexical reflexive entry, but they will not be included in our discussion.

- (i) Irene e Sara *se* depilaram  
 Irene and Sara SI depilate.PAST.3P  
 i. ‘Irene and Sara depilated themselves’  
 ii. ‘Irene and Sara depilated each other’
- (ii) Irene e Sara depilaram  
 Irene and Sara depilate.PAST.3P  
 ‘Irene and Sara depilated themselves’

<b>BrP verbs that rule out <i>se</i> in finite clauses, and support reciprocal readings without <i>se</i></b>
<i>discutir</i> ‘to discuss’, <i>colaborar</i> ‘to collaborate’, <i>brigar</i> ‘to wrestle’, <i>concordar</i> ‘to agree’, <i>discordar</i> ‘to disagree’, <i>negociar</i> ‘to negotiate’, <i>fazer amor</i> ‘to make love’, <i>cooperar</i> ‘to cooperate’, <i>compartilhar algo</i> ‘to share something’, <i>trocar algo</i> ‘to exchange something’, <i>flertar</i> ‘to flirt’, <i>conviver</i> ‘to live together’, <i>confabular</i> ‘to confabulate’, <i>confraternizar</i> ‘to fraternize’, <i>empatar</i> ‘to tie/to draw even’, <i>fofocar</i> ‘to gossip’, <i>reatar</i> ‘to reattach’, <i>duelar</i> ‘to duel’, <i>competir</i> ‘to compete’

Table 1. BrP verbs that do not allow *se* in finite clauses, as in (6)

<b>BrP verbs that support reciprocal readings in finite clauses with optional <i>se</i></b>
<i>abraçar</i> ‘to hug’, <i>separar</i> ‘to break up’, <i>beijar</i> ‘to kiss’, <i>casar</i> ‘to marry’, <i>esbarrar</i> ‘to bump into’, <i>enrolar</i> ‘to intertwine’, <i>namorar</i> ‘to be partner with’, <i>divorciar</i> ‘to divorce’, <i>conversar</i> ‘to converse’, <i>parecer</i> ‘to resemble’, <i>encaixar</i> ‘to match’, <i>debater</i> ‘to debate’, <i>noivar</i> ‘to get engaged’, <i>colidir</i> ‘to collide’, <i>misturar</i> ‘to blend’, <i>alternar</i> ‘to alternate’

Table 2. BrP verbs that optionally take *se* in finite clauses, as in (7)

The predicates listed above exhibit some differences between their binary forms. As illustrated in (8), the verbs in Table 1 can introduce another reciprocal argument using the preposition *com* ‘with’ (i.e. they undergo the ‘with’ simple reciprocal alternation, Levin 1993). Some of the verbs in Table 2 show the same pattern (9a), while some of them can take a direct object (i.e. they undergo the simple transitive reciprocal alternation, in Levin’s terminology), but can also optionally use *com* ‘with’ to introduce the object, as in (9b).

- (8) Irene discutiu/ colaborou com a Sara  
 Irene discuss.PAST.3S collaborate.PAST.3S with the Sara  
 ‘Irene discussed/collaborated with Sara’

- (9) a. Irene casou \*(com) a Sara  
 Irene marry.PAST.3S with the Sara  
 ‘Irene married Sara’  
 b. Irene abraçou (com) a Sara  
 Irene hug.PAST.3S with the Sara  
 ‘Irene hugged (with) Sara’

Despite this variation, all the verbs in Tables 1 and 2 allow their collective intransitive entry to appear without *se* (either obligatorily or optionally). This leads us to hypothesize the existence of a lexical reciprocal entry. This assumption does not only rely on finite clauses, but also on the visible correspondence between these verbs and the class of lexical reciprocals surveyed in typological works (Haspelmath, 2007), as well as the Italian lexical reciprocals that give rise to a reciprocal interpretation without *si* in causatives (Palmieri et al. 2018).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> In Italian there is a crucial contrast between finite and causative clauses: in order to generate a reciprocal interpretation, *si* is obligatory in the former but disallowed in the latter – see example (5). BrP differs in this respect, because *se* is allowed in causatives, where it has the same distribution as in finite clauses. In causatives, in order to have a reciprocal reading, *se* is obligatory with verbs that require this element in finite clauses (i), but it can be omitted with verbs that optionally drop *se* in finite clauses (ii). Thus, given the analogous distribution of BrP *se* across finite and causative clauses, we will only systematically look at the former.

This intuitive assumption requires further evidence, in order to exclude the possibility that the omission of *se* in BrP is an idiosyncratic property of certain verbs. Thus, in the next subsections we will provide independent evidence in favor of our hypothesis, by showing that verbs which omit *se* display two properties that also characterize lexical reciprocals in other languages: they can appear in the discontinuous reciprocal construction (§2.2) and allow a reciprocal interpretation with morpho-syntactically singular NPs (§2.3).

## 2.2 Discontinuous Reciprocal Construction

The discontinuous reciprocal construction is a construction where one reciprocal argument is encoded as syntactic subject, while another reciprocal argument is introduced by the preposition *with*. It has been noted that this construction is generally available with lexical reciprocal verbs (Kemmer 1993, Dimitriadis 2004, Siloni 2012), as illustrated in the Hebrew examples below: in (10a) the lexical reciprocal verb *hug* appears in the discontinuous construction, with an interpretation according to which the boys and the girls hugged. However, the same verb, in its grammatical reciprocal form, leads to ungrammaticality in this construction (10b).

- (10) a. ha-yeladim hitnašku im ha-yeladot  
 the boys kissed<sub>REC</sub> with the-girls  
 ‘the boys kissed with the girls’  
 (Siloni 2012, p. 297)
- b. \*ha-yeladim nišku exad et ha-šeni im ha-yeladot  
 the boys kiss each other with the girls

In BrP, we have seen that the verbs which do not allow *se* in finite clauses require *com* ‘with’ to introduce the second argument. Therefore, their binary entry overlaps with the discontinuous reciprocal construction (11a). Discontinuous reciprocity is furthermore possible with all verbs for which *se* is optional in finite clauses (i.e. those listed in Table 2), as shown in (11b).<sup>4</sup> Note that for these verbs, the presence of *se* is also optional in this construction.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, verbs that require *se* to express reciprocal configurations in finite clauses, lead to ungrammaticality in the discontinuous reciprocal construction (12a). We found a few exceptions in this respect: the verbs *encontrar* ‘to meet’, *consultar* ‘to consult’, *falar* ‘to talk’, *corresponder* ‘to correspond’, *unir* ‘to merge/combine’, *sobrepor* ‘to overlap’ and *confundir* ‘to

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- (i) Eu fiz Irene e Sara se punirem (ii) Eu fiz Irene e Sara (se) abraçarem  
 I make.PP Irene and Sara SI punish.INF I make.PP Irene and Sara SI hug.INF  
 ‘I caused Irene and Sara to punish each other’ ‘I caused Irene and Sara to hug’

<sup>4</sup> The only exception in this respect is *beijar* ‘to kiss’, which takes an optional *se* in finite clauses, but leads to ungrammaticality in the discontinuous reciprocal construction, regardless of the presence of *se*:

- (i) \*Irene (se) beijou com a Sara  
 Irene SI kiss.PAST.3S with the Sara

<sup>5</sup> In this respect, the verbs *debater* ‘to debate’ and *conversar* ‘to converse’ constitute an exception, as they do not allow *se* in this construction, although *se* is optional in finite clauses.

- (i) Irene (\*se) debatou/ conversou com a Sara  
 Irene SI debate.PAST.3S converse.PAST.3S with the Sara  
 ‘Irene debated/ conversed with Sara’

confuse’ can appear in the discontinuous reciprocal construction, although they obligatorily require *se* (12b).<sup>6</sup>

- (11) a. Irene discutiu / colaborou com a Sara  
 Irene discuss.PAST.3S collaborate.PAST.3S with the Sara  
 ‘Irene discussed/collaborated with Sara’  
 b. Irene (se) abraçou / casou com a Sara  
 Irene SI hug.PAST.3S marry.PAST.3S with the Sara  
 ‘Irene hugged/married with Sara’
- (12) a. \*Irene se puniu / agradeceu com a Sara  
 Irene SI punish.PAST.3S thank.PAST.3S with the Sara  
 b. Irene se encontrou / consultou com a Sara  
 Irene SI meet.PAST.3S consult.PAST.3S with the Sara  
 ‘Irene met/conferred with Sara’

In line with previous works suggesting that the lexical reciprocal entry is a condition for the availability of the discontinuous reciprocal construction, the BrP data above provide evidence in favor of our hypothesis: the verbs that can convey a reciprocal interpretation without *se* in finite clauses also allow discontinuous reciprocity. The few other verbs that allow discontinuous reciprocity but require *se* have meanings that are often associated with reciprocal verbs, hence we speculate that their requirement of *se* is an idiosyncrasy.

### 2.3 Morpho-syntactically Singular Group NPs

Group nouns are nouns such as *committee*, *team* or *couple* in English, which can take a plural but not a singular *of*-complement (Barker, 1992):

- (13) a. A team/ committee/ couple of women  
 b. \*A team/ committee/ couple of woman

Group NPs constitute an interesting instrument for identifying lexical reciprocity: across different languages, lexical reciprocal verbs lead to considerably different interpretations than grammatical reciprocals when associated with group NPs (Authier & Reed 2018, Palmieri et al. 2018). In English, *each other* is unacceptable with all verbs and singular group-denoting subjects (14a). In Italian, with most verbs, *si* only generates a reflexive interpretation with morpho-syntactically singular group NPs: (14b) is interpreted with the team (as a whole) punishing itself. By contrast, both in English and Italian, lexical reciprocal verbs yield a collective interpretation if combined with group NPs: the examples in (15) are interpreted with the members of the team hugging.

<sup>6</sup> Note that the verbs *unir* ‘to merge/combine’, *sobrepor* ‘to overlap’ and *confundir* ‘to confuse’ express a reciprocal configuration among the objects of the binary entry (i) and the subjects of the unary entry (ii):

- (i) Irene uniu água e farinha (ii) Água e farinha se uniram  
 Irene merge.PAST.3S water and flour water and flour SI merge.PAST.3P  
 ‘Irene combined water and flour’ ‘Water and flour combined’

- (14) a. \*The team has punished each other  
 b. #La squadra si è punita  
 the team SI be.AUX.1S punish.PP  
 ‘#The team punished itself’
- (15) a. The team has hugged  
 b. La squadra si è abbracciata  
 The team SI be.AUX.1S hug.PP  
 ‘The team hugged’

An analogous distinction can be found in BrP, where the availability of a reciprocal interpretation with singular group nouns is also restricted. As exemplified in (16a), the BrP verbs that obligatorily omit *se* allow a reciprocal interpretation with the group noun *o time* ‘the team’, in parallel to the reciprocal interpretation of the English and Italian examples in (15). The same reading is available for the verbs with an optional *se* (16b).<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, verbs that cannot drop *se* in finite clauses do not generally allow a reciprocal interpretation with singular group NPs, but rather a reflexive one (17a), similarly to the Italian example in (14b). However, also in this respect, some verbs constitute an exception: *encontrar* ‘to meet’, *consultar* ‘to consult’, *falar* ‘to talk’, *corresponder* ‘to correspond’, *unir* ‘to merge/combine’, *sobrepor* ‘to overlap’ and *confundir* ‘to confuse’ yield a reciprocal interpretation, although the presence of *se* is obligatory, both in finite clauses and in (17b). Importantly, these are the same verbs that also allow the discontinuous reciprocal construction.

- (16) a. O time (\*se) discutiu / colaborou  
 the team SI discuss.PAST.3S collaborate.PAST.3S  
 ‘The members of the team discussed/collaborated’  
 b. O time (se) abraçou / separou  
 The team SI hug.PAST.3S separate.PAST.3S  
 ‘The team hugged/separated’
- (17) a. #O time se puniu / agradeceu  
 the team SI punish.PAST.3S thank.PAST.3S  
 ‘#The team punished/thanked itself’

<sup>7</sup> Similarly to what has been observed with the discontinuous reciprocal construction (see footnote 5), the presence of *se* across different constructions is not the same as in finite clauses. Among the verbs that have an optional *se* in finite clauses, three require *se* in order to give a reciprocal interpretation with group NPs (i), while one verb does not allow *se* in this environment (ii).

- (i) O time \*(se) parece/ beija/ misturou  
 The team SI resemble.PRES.3S kiss.PRES.3S mix.PRES.3S  
 ‘The members of the team resemble/ kissed/ mixed with each other’
- (ii) O time (\*se) debate  
 The team SI debate.PRES.3S  
 ‘The members of the team debate’



- b. O time se encontrou / consultou  
 the team SI meet.PAST.3S contult.PAST.3S  
 ‘The team met/conferred’

These data provide support in favor of a lexical/grammatical distinction in BrP, based on a semantic property that has been observed in other languages. The division that emerged is in line with our hypothesis: a reciprocal interpretation with singular group NPs is available with verbs that can omit *se* in finite clauses, and, except for a few exceptions, the converse is true as well.

### 3 Lexical Reciprocals in BrP: a Comparison with Italian

We have seen that BrP verbs which can (or must) denote reciprocity without *se* in finite clauses can appear in the discontinuous reciprocal construction and allow a reciprocal interpretation with morpho-syntactically singular group NPs, properties that characterize lexical reciprocals in other languages. These data support our hypothesis that verbs which do not require *se* in reciprocal finite clauses have a lexical reciprocal entry. From these data, it also emerges that the reverse generalization does not fully hold: we identified seven verbs (*encontrar* ‘to meet’, *falar* ‘to talk’, *corresponder* ‘to correspond’, *consultar* ‘to consult’, *unir* ‘to merge/combine’, *sobrepôr* ‘to overlap’ and *confundir* ‘to confuse’) whose behavior with respect to discontinuous reciprocity and group NPs is consistently analogous to lexical reciprocals, although they cannot convey reciprocal interpretations without *se* in finite clauses. Moreover, these verbs denote concepts that are generally expressed by lexical reciprocals cross-linguistically (Haspelmath, 2007). A possible way to look at this variability in the status of *se* with verbs that otherwise display a reciprocal behavior is to assume that *se* is ceasing to be used with lexical reciprocal verbs, and it is bound to disappear with verbs with such an entry. In this view, verbs with an optional *se* might be in the process of losing it, while for other verbs, the loss of *se* could be expected in the future; the disappearance of the reflexive *se* in BrP is noted in many researches (see Bittencourt (2009), a.o.). Furthermore, for the verbs *unir* ‘to merge/combine’, *sobrepôr* ‘to overlap’ and *confundir* ‘to confuse’, the obligatory presence of *se* might be linked to the causative/inchoative alternation that these verbs undergo (see footnote 6).

The non-uniform distribution of *se* across different lexical reciprocal verbs with the same semantic properties, as well as across different constructions for the same verb (see footnote 5 and 7), validates the existing proposal that *se* does not directly contribute to the reciprocal interpretation of these verbs, which is equally available regardless of the presence of *se*; the reciprocal interpretation must therefore originate from the verb root.

This pattern allows a comparison with Italian. As we have seen, Italian verbs with a lexical reciprocal entry equally allow reciprocal readings in causatives (where *si* is disallowed) and in finite clauses (where *si* is obligatory). Therefore, *si* cannot be considered responsible for lexical reciprocal meanings, which are rather due to the lexical meaning of some verbs. This pattern led us to propose that *si* is a marker of intransitivity, in line with Labelle (2008), and whose obligatory presence is dictated by syntactic requirements of finite clauses (Palmieri et al. 2018). This analysis finds further support in the data from BrP, and it narrows down the difference between Italian and BrP: we propose that the function of *si/se* is the same in both languages, but they differ in the syntactic requirements for the use of this element in finite clauses. Italian lexical reciprocal verbs can convey a reciprocal interpretation without *si* in causative constructions, while this element is

always obligatory in finite clauses. On the other hand, in BrP *se* can be omitted also in finite clauses, in the presence of a lexical reciprocal entry. Thus, in both cases the reciprocal interpretation results from the verb root and does not change regardless of the presence of *si/se*. The difference between the distribution of *si/se* in Italian and BrP, therefore, is to be analyzed in terms of syntactic requirements of finite clauses, which are left for further research.

Our second question in this paper concerns the possible correspondence between the meanings that are expressed by lexical reciprocal entries in BrP and Italian. In typological works, it has been proposed that the concepts that are lexicalized as reciprocals constitute a cross-linguistically stable class (Haspelmath, 2007). Therefore, it is natural to expect consistency between lexical reciprocals across these two Romance languages.

In order to draw a comparison, let us first present the Italian lexical reciprocal verbs we identified in Palmieri et al. (2018), reported below in Table 3. These verbs express mutual configurations without *si* in causatives, while this element is required in finite clauses. The table includes verbs with a transitive binary entry (i.e. where the second reciprocal argument is a direct object), as well as a few verbs which do not have a transitive binary entry, and that were not included in Palmieri et al. (2018): it is the case of the verbs *fidanzarsi* ‘to get engaged’, *scontrarsi* ‘to collide’, *ricongiungersi* ‘to reattach’, *scambiarsi qualcosa* ‘to exchange something’.<sup>8</sup>

Italian verbs that require <i>si</i> in finite clauses and have a lexical reciprocal entry
<i>abbracciare</i> ‘to hug’, <i>lasciare</i> ‘to leave/break up’, <i>consultare</i> ‘to consult’, <i>baciare</i> ‘to kiss’, <i>incontrare</i> ‘to meet’, <i>coccolare</i> ‘to cuddle’, <i>salutare</i> ‘to greet’, <i>sposare</i> ‘to marry’, <i>frequentare</i> ‘to date’, <i>incorciare</i> ‘to bump into’, <i>battere</i> ‘to fight’, <i>intrecciarsi</i> ‘to intertwine’, <i>sovrapporsi</i> ‘to overlap’, <i>confondersi</i> ‘to confuse/blend with’, <i>alternarsi</i> ‘to alternate’, <i>unire</i> ‘to merge/combine’, <i>mescolare</i> ‘to blend’, <i>fidanzarsi</i> ‘to get engaged’, <i>scontrarsi</i> ‘to collide’, <i>ricongiungersi</i> ‘to reattach’, <i>scambiarsi qualcosa</i> ‘to exchange something’

Table 3. Italian lexical reciprocal verbs, adapted from Palmieri et al. (2018)

It is worth pointing out that also in Italian there is a class of verbs that give reciprocity without *si* (18), but whose binary entry requires the preposition *con* ‘with’ to introduce the second reciprocal argument, similarly to the BrP verbs in Table 1. These verbs have often been overlooked in the literature, but they show properties of lexical reciprocity that we discussed so far: they allow discontinuous reciprocity (19a) and reciprocal reading with group NPs (19b). Table 4 presents a list of these verbs.

- (18) Irene e Sara discutono / collaborano  
 Irene and Sara discuss.PRES.3P collaborate.PRES.3P  
 ‘Irene and Sara discuss/collaborate’

<sup>8</sup> The verbs *fidanzarsi* ‘to get engaged’, *scontrarsi* ‘to collide’, *ricongiungersi* ‘to reattach’, *scambiarsi qualcosa* ‘to exchange something’ do not have a transitive binary entry (i), but they necessarily require the presence of *si*, as well as the preposition *con* ‘with’ to introduce the reciprocal argument (ii), as in the discontinuous reciprocal construction:

- (i) \*Irene fidanza Sara  
 Irene engage.PRES.1S Sara  
 (ii) Irene *si* fidanza con Sara  
 Irene *SI* engage.PRES.1S with Sara  
 ‘Irene gets engaged with Sara’

- (19) a. Irene discute / collabora con Sara  
 Irene discuss.PRES.3S collaborate.PRES.3S with Sara  
 ‘Irene discusses/collaborates with Sara’
- b. La squadra discute / collabora  
 the team discuss.PRES.3S collaborate.PRES.3S  
 ‘The members of the team discuss/collaborate’

<b>Italian verbs that do not allow <i>si</i> in finite clauses and have a lexical reciprocal entry</b>
<i>discutere</i> ‘to discuss’, <i>collaborare</i> ‘to collaborate’, <i>lottare</i> ‘to wrestle’, <i>negoziare</i> ‘to negotiate’, <i>fare l’amore</i> ‘to make love’, <i>cooperare</i> ‘to cooperate’, <i>condividere</i> ‘to share something’, <i>flirtare</i> ‘to flirt’, <i>convivere</i> ‘to live together’, <i>confabulare</i> ‘to confabulate’, <i>fraternizzare</i> ‘to fraternize’, <i>duellare</i> ‘to duel’, <i>divorziare</i> ‘to divorce’, <i>competere</i> ‘to compete’, <i>dibattere</i> ‘to debate’, <i>corrispondere</i> ‘to correspond’, <i>conversare</i> ‘to converse’, <i>combattere</i> ‘to fight’, <i>parlare</i> ‘to talk’, <i>pareggiare</i> ‘to tie/to draw even’ <i>essere d’accordo</i> ‘to agree’, <i>essere in disaccordo</i> ‘to disagree’, <i>legare</i> ‘to become attached to’

Table 4. Italian lexical reciprocal verbs which do not allow *si*.

At this point, it is possible to observe a correspondence between lexical reciprocals in BrP and Italian. The comparison between each BrP verb and its Italian counterpart is determined by the translation of these verbs into English. Therefore, we do not claim that verbs that are compared here have exactly the same interpretation, but rather that they generate analogous readings and denote approximately the same realm of meanings.

As Table 5 shows, there is no complete overlap, but a remarkable consistency in the verbs that have a lexical entry in the two languages. Table 5 contains a summary of the verbs that have a lexical reciprocal entry only in one language (i) or in both languages (ii).

	<b>BrP</b>	<b>Italian</b>
(i)	<i>parecer</i> ‘to resemble’, <i>fofocar</i> ‘to gossip’, <i>namorar</i> ‘to be partner with’, <i>encaixar</i> ‘to match’	<i>coccolare</i> ‘to cuddle’, <i>salutare</i> ‘to greet’, <i>legare</i> ‘to become attached to’, <i>battere/combattere</i> ‘to fight’, <i>frequentare</i> ‘to date’
(ii)	<i>brigar/lottare</i> ‘to wrestle’, <i>colaborar/collaborare</i> ‘to collaborate’, <i>concordar/essere d’accordo</i> ‘to agree’, <i>discordar/essere in disaccordo</i> ‘to disagree’, <i>negociar/negoziare</i> ‘to negotiate’, <i>fazer amor/fare l’amore</i> ‘to make love’, <i>cooperar/cooperare</i> ‘to cooperate’, <i>compartilhar algo/condividere qualcosa</i> ‘to share something’, <i>trocar algo/scambiarsi qualcosa</i> ‘to exchange something’, <i>flertar/flirtare</i> ‘to flirt’, <i>conviver/convivere</i> ‘to live together’, <i>confabular/confabulare</i> ‘to confabulate’, <i>confraternizar/fraternizzare</i> ‘to fraternize’, <i>duelar/duellare</i> ‘to duel’, <i>divorciar/divorziare</i> ‘to divorce’, <i>competir/competere</i> ‘to compete’, <i>conversar/conversare</i> ‘to converse’, <i>falar/parlare</i> ‘to talk’, <i>noivar/fidanzarsi</i> ‘to get engaged’, <i>reatar/riconciliarsi</i> ‘to reattach’, <i>enrolar/intrecciarsi</i> ‘to intertwine’, <i>colidir/scontrarsi</i> ‘to collide’, <i>casar/sposare</i> ‘to marry’, <i>separar/lasciare</i> ‘to break up’, <i>empatar/pareggiare</i> ‘to tie/to draw even’, <i>esbarrar/incrociare</i> ‘to bump into’, <i>abraçar/abbracciare</i> ‘to hug’, <i>beijar/baciare</i> ‘to kiss’,	

<i>consultar/consultare</i> ‘to consult/confer’, <i>encontrar/incontrare</i> ‘to meet’, <i>corresponder/corrispondere</i> ‘to correspond’, <i>misturar/mescolarsi</i> ‘to blend’, <i>alternar/alternarsi</i> ‘to alternate’, <i>unir/unire</i> ‘to merge/combine’, <i>sobrapor/sovrapporre</i> ‘to overlap’, <i>confundir/confondere</i> ‘to confuse’
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Table 5. Lexical reciprocal verbs in BrP and Italian.

To conclude, we have observed a correspondence both in the way that reciprocal meanings are conveyed in BrP and Italian, as well as in the class of meanings of lexical reciprocal entries. We propose that both in BrP and Italian, the reciprocal interpretation is due to the verb root of lexical reciprocals, and *si/se* does not semantically contribute to this interpretation. While the comparison with Italian was motivated by the availability of data on lexical reciprocity in this language, a comparison including more Romance languages could lead to relevant generalizations regarding which concepts are lexicalized as reciprocals, as well as how these meanings are conveyed.

#### 4 A few Words on Grammatical Reciprocity

In the previous section, we proposed that in BrP *se* does not contribute to the reciprocal interpretation of lexical reciprocal verbs, and that these verbs denote reciprocal configurations due to the meaning of the verb root. The primary focus of this paper is lexical reciprocity, but a main remaining question concerns the contribution of *se* to grammatical reciprocity: if *se* does not contribute to lexical reciprocity, what is its role when associated to transitive verbs without any lexical entry? On the one hand, it could be possible to expect a syncretism of *se*, along the lines of Doron & Rappaport Hovav (2009). According to this proposal, *se* is a marker when associated with lexical reciprocals, but a pronoun with other transitive verbs. However, in this section, we will illustrate that the data from BrP are in line with our proposal in Palmieri et al. (2018) that *si/se* can never be considered as a pronoun, and should be analyzed as a marker also when it is associated with transitive verbs.

In Italian, *si* is always obligatory in finite clauses, even when it coappears with the operator *a vicenda* ‘mutually, in turns’ (20a). This latter element, however, can lead to a reciprocal interpretation in causatives, where *si* is disallowed (20b). BrP shows a similar pattern in finite clauses: *se* and the operator *um(a) a/o outro/a* ‘one another’ can coappear (21b) or be in complementary distribution, as in (21a) and (21c), therefore also allowing grammatical reciprocal meanings without *se* (21c).

- (20) a. Irene e Sara \*(si) puniscono (a vicenda)  
Irene and Sara SI punish.PRES.3P mutually  
‘Irene and Sara punish each other’  
b. Ho fatto (\*si) punire (\*si) Irene e Sara a vicenda  
Have.AUX.1S make.PP SI punish.INF SI Irene and Sara mutually  
‘I caused Irene and Sara to punish each other’

- (21) a. Irene e Sara se puniram  
 b. Irene e Sara se puniram uma a outra  
 c. Irene e Sara puniram uma a outra  
 Irene and Sara SI punish.PAST.3P one the other  
 ‘Irene and Sara punished each other’

The distribution of *se* in (21) suggests that this element cannot be considered a reciprocal operator such as English *each other*. In fact, the possible co-occurrence of *se* and *um(a) a/o outro/a* ‘one another’ excludes the possibility that they are both operators. Moreover, considering *se* the reciprocal operator and *um(a) a/o outro/a* an intensifier would not explain the cases where the latter conveys reciprocity without *se* (21c). A possible explanation for these data is that *si/se* is always a marker, even when associated with transitive verbs. In absence of an overt grammatical reciprocal operator, *si/se* can also license covert reciprocity, as in (20a) or (21a). This proposal is compatible with our discussion of lexical reciprocity: unlike Italian, BrP does not require *se* to obligatorily appear in finite clauses, if another source of reciprocity is present (such as a lexical reciprocal entry or, in this case, a grammatical operator).

Also in this respect, further research on the nature of *si/se* and the restrictions on its distribution might be needed to provide further support in favor of this proposal.

## 5 Conclusions

Unlike other Romance languages, BrP does not always require the presence of *se* in order to convey reciprocal meanings in finite clauses. In this paper, we looked at the distribution of *se* and focused on two main questions. On the one hand, we asked whether the BrP verbs that can generate a reciprocal interpretation without *se* have a lexical reciprocal entry. On the other hand, we investigated to what extent the class of lexical reciprocals in BrP overlaps with the one identified in Italian, a Romance language which expresses reciprocity in a more ‘conventional’ way, i.e. where *si* is obligatory in finite clauses.

We proposed that BrP verbs that can give a reciprocal interpretation without *se*, do have a lexical reciprocal entry, and we supported this claim with evidence from different properties that characterize lexical reciprocals in other languages: (i) the discontinuous reciprocal construction and (ii) the availability of reciprocal readings with morpho-syntactically singular group NPs. We have seen that we cannot generalize the obligatory presence of *se* as lack of a lexical reciprocal entry: we encountered some verbs which show semantic properties of lexical reciprocity, although they cannot appear without *se* in finite clauses. Moreover, we have shown that there is a great correspondence between verbs that have a lexical reciprocal entry in BrP and Italian.

From a closer comparison between BrP and Italian, it also emerged that despite the surface differences, these languages do not differ substantially in the way they convey reciprocal meanings. We proposed that the difference relies on the obligatory presence of *si/se* in finite clauses, whose nature is purely syntactic. In none of these languages there seems to be convincing evidence to consider *si/se* responsible for reciprocal meanings, neither lexical nor grammatical. Further research on the cross-linguistic distribution of *si/se* might elucidate the role of this element from a syntactic perspective. Moreover, extending the research to other Romance languages could help establish whether the lexical semantic distinctions found in BrP and Italian can be generalized.

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