Universal Quantification in Brazilian Portuguese

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There are basically two proposals for the semantics of 'all' in the literature. One of them claims that 'all' is a distributive quantifier by itself: one that is able to distribute over the "subentailments" of some collective predicates, such as (1) (see Dowty 1986, Taub 1989). The other proposal claims that 'all' is not a quantifier, but is just a DP modifier that demands that no entity in the denotation of the DP should be disregarded when the predicate (or its subentailments) get distributed (Brisson 2005).

(1) All the students gathered in the hall

The quantifier *todo* in Brazilian Portuguese (BP) selects not only plural and singular definite descriptions, but also Bare Noun phrases (see (2)-(4)).

(2) Todo tapete deve ser lavado (uma vez por ano).
'Every carpet must be washed (once a year)'

(3) Todo o tapete deve ser lavado.
'The whole carpet must be washed'

(4) Todos os tapetes devem ser lavados.
'All the carpets must be washed'

In this talk I will evaluate the two theories about 'all'. I will show that none of the proposals is able to give a unified account of the behavior of *todo* in contexts such as (2)-(3) and also explain the contrasts of (un)grammaticality of *todo* with collective predicates, such as in (5) and (6).

(5) a. *Todos os coalas foram numerosos na Austrália.
I claim that *todo* is the same universal quantifier in all contexts: it relates the atoms in the denotation of both its restriction and its predicate. Nevertheless, it differs from quantifiers like *every* in that these atoms – be they entities or events - need not be of the same sort of the entity/entities or event(s) denoted by the whole DP or by the predicate collectively. For instance, each family may be said to be numerous (in BP), because families have atomic parts, albeit not of the same sort, thus the grammaticality of (5b). In the same way, in sentence (6b), the subentailments of the predicate *construir o barco*, which are not subevents of the same sort of *construir o barco*, may be distributed among the members of the family.

6a. *Toda a criança construiu o barco.*

6b. *Toda a família construiu o barco.*