



First names and surnames in Brazil: A systematic review of literature

Prenomes e sobrenomes no Brasil: uma revisão sistemática de literatura

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ABSTRACT: This article reports on a systematic review of literature aimed at investigating what primary official personal names are like in Brazilian Portuguese and how they have been researched epistemologically. To this end, 15 articles were extracted from a bibliographic list of 44 articles on Onomastics published from 2011 to 2021. The findings point to great etymological diversity in both surnames and first names. Except for names of indigenous people and descendants of slaves, ancestor ethnicity and etymology of surname bearers correlate in Brazil. Two types of first names have been reported: conventional names, which are integrated into the Brazilian repertoire in a given period, chosen in harmony with local customs and connected to religious or national traditions, and unconventional names, which diverge from the previous ones and are evaluated as different and one of a kind. Over 25% of the studies approach two or more linguistic levels of analysis, as they are etymologically, orthographically, and/or morphologically oriented. Most studies are local in scope, and all studies account for not only for linguistic features, but also the social and historical context of the data analysed.

KEYWORDS: Systematic review of literature. Anthroponomastics. Primary official name. Brazil.

RESUMO: Este artigo apresenta uma revisão sistemática de literatura que visa revelar a constituição dos nomes de pessoa oficiais primários na língua portuguesa no Brasil e identificar as características epistemológicas das pesquisas desenvolvidas. Para tanto, foi feita uma seleção de 15 artigos extraídos de uma lista bibliográfica contendo 44 artigos sobre Onomástica publicados de 2011 a 2021. Os resultados mostram que há grande diversidade etimológica tanto nos sobrenomes quanto nos prenomes. Com exceção dos povos nativos e dos descendentes de escravos, há correlação entre a etnia dos antepassados e a etimologia dos sobrenomes em uso no Brasil. Foram evidenciados dois tipos de nomes: convencionais, que estão integrados no repertório onomástico do Brasil em determinado período, são escolhidos em harmonia com costumes locais e estão conectados a tradições religiosas ou nacionais; e não convencionais, que destoam da categoria anterior e são avaliados como nomes diferentes e singulares. Mais de 25% das pesquisas abrangem mais de um nível linguístico de análise, uma vez que abordam os níveis etimológico, ortográfico e/ou morfológico. Constatou-se também que predominam as pesquisas de abrangência local e que, em todos os estudos, os dados foram analisados levando-se em consideração, para além do aspecto linguístico, o contexto histórico e social da fonte dos dados analisados.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Revisão sistemática de literatura. Antroponomástica. Nome oficial primário. Brasil.

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1 Introduction

This article reports on a systematic review of literature within Anthroponymy considering online, open access articles on primary official names¹ in Portuguese published from 2011 to 2021. Unlike ordinary review of literature², systematic review of literature relies on a set of criteria for selecting and assessing previous publications. It is indicated for systematizing epistemological aspects of a given area of knowledge or answering a specific research question.

A systematic review of literature is a type of research that analyzes previous publications within a given domain. It starts with one or more research questions and unfolds through producing and applying a protocol that defines search places and criteria for including or excluding publications; upon initial data collection, the publications are read thoroughly, and selection criteria are applied to shortlist them. Widely employed in the health sciences, it is recommended whenever it is needed to systematize the body of knowledge on a given topic and/or to propose guidelines for future research³. It follows 7 steps⁴: 1) define the research question and the scope of research, 2) identify the database(s) to be used, including keywords and search strategy, 3) carry out an initial search and selection of articles (generally by reading titles, abstracts, and keywords), 4) apply the selection criteria and justify any exclusions, 5) perform a critical analysis and assessment of all studies included, 6) provide a synthesis of the information found in the articles, and 7) draw conclusions (SAMPAIO; MANCINI, 2007).

¹ A primary official name corresponds to one's full name as found in the register office. Having legal value, it is a right of the name bearer, and a duty of parents or guardians – for further information, cf. Van Langendonck (2007).

² An example of ordinary review of literature in Onomastics can be found in Seide (2016).

³ An example of a systematic review of literature is Rusu (2021).

⁴ In the health sciences, research selection and assessment are commonly carried out by at least 2 researchers. Each researcher prepares a list of publications, and the resulting lists are compared to focus analysis on their common publications. This procedure was not adopted in this study, i.e., the entire collection and selection processes were carried out by the author only.

This study seeks to answer 2 research questions: What are the primary official person names like in Brazil? How have they been explored in previous publications? To answer these questions, articles from 2011 to 2021 were selected from a larger bibliographic list (ICOS, 2022). The initial list (containing 44 articles) was based on the following inclusion criteria: 1) be an article written in Portuguese, English, Spanish, or French, 2) address anthroponyms exclusively, 3) be open access and available online, 4) be authored by recognized researchers in the field in Brazil, or be published in a thematic issue on Onomastics in journals *Revista de Estudos Linguísticos* (SEABRA; ISQUERDO, 2018) or *Domínios de Lingu@gem* (CARVALHINHOS; NERI, 2021), or be published in journals *GTLex* or *Onomástica desde América Latina*. These journals were chosen because they are known for publishing articles in the field, in addition to being used by Onomastics researchers. The following exclusion criteria applied to the initial list: not address primary official names, which resulted in 15 articles.

This systematic review of literature targets the primary official names, a category of person names proposed by Van Langendonck (2007), and their use in Brazilian anthroponyms (AMARAL; SEIDE, 2020). A primary official name is one's civil name as in the register office. As a right of all children and a duty of their parents or caregivers, this name is official because it is provided for by law and it is primary because it prototypically is the first one given to an individual.

This systematic review of literature is organized into 4 sections, including this Introduction. Section 2 briefly describes the publications, including their objects of study, the sources they used, and their findings. Section 3 summarizes the findings of this systematic review. Section 4 provides the research conclusion.

2 Description of the studies found in the systematic review of literature

In Portuguese, it is customary to have the first name immediately followed by the mother's surname and subsequently the father's surname. At marriage, it is customary for a wife to take her husband's surname and relinquish the surname

inherited from her parents (AMARAL; SEIDE, 2020). As a surname is inherited and survives from generation to generation, the history of its bearers is potentially retrievable through linguistic and/or etymological analysis. Four out of the 15 articles selected in the systematic review of literature address surnames and/or first names and surnames: Martins et al., (2020), Seide (2020a), Tavares de Barros, Santos Heidmann, and Philippsen (2020), and Vescovi (2021). This section is divided into 2 parts: 1) research focusing on surnames, and 2) research focusing on first names.

2.1 Research on surnames

Martins et al. (2020) analyze the surnames of indigenous students enrolled in the Undergraduate Program in Intercultural Teacher Education at Universidade Federal de Grande Dourados (UFGD) from 2005 to 2019. After identifying the original language of 159 surnames, the authors found out that sample contained mostly surnames of Spanish origin (e.g., Benites, Morales, and Sanches). Far from indicating the origin of the surname bearers, the fact that many of these indigenous people bear originally Spanish surnames is historically explained, as “the Guarani territory was colonized by Spain and not by Portugal” (MARTINS et al., 2020, p. 55) and the indigenous people adopted their colonizers’ surnames when civil registration became mandatory. In this case, surnames serve as testimony to the history of colonization in Latin America. Their study also points to the use of first names serving as surnames (e.g., “Pedro” in the sample).⁵

Seide’s (2020a) study of surnames also point to both the history of the bearers’ ancestors and the history of Brazil, specifically with regard to migration flows that occurred throughout the 19th century and in the early 20th century. The first wave of immigration of Lithuanians to Brazil took place between 1926 and 1930, mostly comprising small landowners. The second wave, which included a smaller number of

⁵ This study addresses first names and surnames. The article will be resumed in section 2.2 focusing on first names.

immigrants, took place from 1942 to 1950 as a result of World War 2. The study analyzed a sample of 31 surnames of descendants of Lithuanian immigrants collected in 2017 from comments to a post published in a closed Facebook group that brings together descendants of Lithuanians living in Brazil. In the sample, 34% of the surnames borne by women and 30% of those borne by men were Lithuanian. As the author explains, those surnames were adapted to the Portuguese language.

Understanding this adaptation requires a previous knowledge of how surnames are used in the Lithuanian language. The surname “Linkevičius” is the form used by men, married or single, while “Linkevičyen” is used by a woman who is married to a Linkevičius and “Linkevičiūtė” is used by a single woman who is daughter of a Linkevičius⁶. The sample contains a record of the form “Linkevicius” as the surname of a man of Lithuanian descent. In this case, the letters in the original surname are not the same as in the one registered in Brazil, which is indicative of a spelling and phonetic adaptation to the Portuguese language. A morphological adaptation also occurred amongst female descendants, as their surnames were registered in the masculine form, i.e., ending as in the male surnames (e.g., the “as” in “Tumas” used for male surnames).

The occurrence of a non-Lithuanian surname was more frequent among women; however, occurrences in both male and female anthroponyms indicate mixed marriages either with native Brazilians or with descendants of immigrants from other origins. In addition to Lithuanian surnames, records were found of Italian (e.g., “Vantini”), Luso-Brazilian (e.g., “Marques”), Germanic (e.g., “Harder”), Japanese (e.g., “Tamashiro”), and Russian (e.g., “Charoff”) surnames.

These findings reported by Seide (2020a) show the linguistic diversity of surnames registered in Brazil and testify to the history and complexity of migration

⁶ The surname of a single Lithuanian woman indicating her father is similar to ancient patronyms (anthroponyms that originate from the father’s name or the male ancestor’s); in the Iberian context, the surname “Rodrigues”, for instance, was formerly a patronym used to designate the son or daughter of a Rodrigo (AMARAL; SEIDE, 2020).

flows into Brazil. In fact, the Brazilian demographics include descendants of immigrants from various regions, mostly Portuguese, which is explained not only by the Portuguese colonization started in the 16th century, but also by later migration flows.

Part of this migration history is unveiled by Tavares de Barros, Santos Heidmann, and Philippsen (2020), who identified Portuguese and Spanish surnames on gravestones in cemeteries in the Municipality of Iguatu, located in the western region of the State of Paraná. Colonization in this region, which became a municipality in 1990, intensified only after 1950, usually attracting descendants of people born in the states of Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina, whose ancestors were mostly Germanic, Italian, or Polish.

The researchers also found 27 Iberian names⁷ on the gravestones. As they report, the region also attracted people from the Northeast of Brazil and from the States of Minas Gerais and São Paulo, which feature several people of Portuguese origin and Spanish immigrants, who were initially looking for jobs in the coffee plantations in São Paulo in the late 19th-century. Consistent with the colonization history of the municipality, the corpus contained Portuguese surnames such as “Pinto de Melo” and Spanish surnames such as “Camargo” and “Arruda”. The findings show that the study of surnames reveals not only displacements from a country to another, but it also traces the domestic migration flows within Brazil.

2.2 Research on first names

First names are personal names that individualize people within their family. Official first names are currently characterized as the result of the parents’ legal obligation to name their children and give notice in a register office. Before the 19th

⁷ The researchers carried out qualitative research, which is why they did not quantitatively analyze the ratio of bearers of Iberian surnames in the population.

century, however, such secular obligation did not exist, as names were officially registered by the Church at baptism.

Martins et al. (2020) found that only 2 of all the first names in the sample (509) were etymologically indigenous: “Jacy” and “Iracy”. Despite these results, some usage preferences may be related to how peculiarly the indigenous people absorbed other cultures. For example, the corpus contained few compound names (9), biblical names (32), repeated names (the most frequent name was “Edson”, with 5 occurrences), and spelling-changed names (3, as in “Thiago”, with the additional letter “h”, and “Katiuse”, with an “s” in the place of “c” and the initial “k” in the place of “c”).⁸

Seide’s (2020a) research on the names of descendants also indicate the adoption of names that are frequent in Brazil and few uses of typical Lithuanian names. Her sample contained 13 male and 31 female first names, out of which only one was Lithuanian masculine (“Vitas”, spelled according to the orthographic rules of the Portuguese language⁹) and another one was Lithuanian feminine (“Grazina”, with spelling and pronunciation according to the Portuguese language¹⁰). In a name-giving practice that converges with the Lithuanian practice, some records consisted of etymologically or semantically Christian names: 4 male names (e.g., “Jorge”) and 2 female names (i.e., “Maria” and “Regina”). The use of compound names was also limited (5). The records included an Italian name (i.e., “Mariela”) and Spanish names (i.e., “Alonso”, “Danita”, and “Carmen” in the compound “Maria del Carmen”). Three names featured spelling changes (e.g., “Victor”, where the “c” is inconsistent with the Portuguese orthography).

Another study of first names and surnames is Vescovi (2021), who investigates the influence of a migration movement that took place in 1970 on the anthroponyms in the Municipality of Palotina in the western region of the State of Paraná. At that

⁸ The letters “k”, “w” and “y” have been accepted in the official spelling of proper names of foreign origin through the 2012 spelling reform of the Portuguese language.

⁹ “Vytas” in Lithuanian.

¹⁰ “Gražina” in Lithuanian.

time, people from the northern region of the state migrated to that municipality to work in mint farms. They stayed in the municipality for a few years and migrated again upon the mint decline. After comparing the names in the sample from before, during and after the so-called “Mint Era”, the researcher found that the first names introduced by the migrants fell into disuse as soon as the period ended. Examples of such names include the female first name “Frosina” and the male first name “Jovernal”. The researcher also analyzed the surnames etymologically: while at least 50% were Italian in 1950, that was the case for as few as 10% in 1970, with the figures increasing to 25% in 1975.

Also listing first names and surnames, Seide (2015) carried out a study in the Municipality of Marechal Cândido Rondon. She analyzes a sample of 500 birth certificates collected according to procedures by Grespan and Seide (2013) and Vescovi (2020). She organized the names into sets according to the etymology of the father’s surname and assessed whether there were preferences for choosing first names that shared the same etymology of the paternal surname. Only 2 female first names were indicative of identity relationships: “Regina” was more used in the Germanic community, and “Aparecida” was found only in families that did not have a Germanic paternal surname.

Soledade (2019b) maps a historical panorama by exploring the Portuguese anthroponymic system, analyzing how it was transferred to Brazil, and describing what characterizes the Brazilian anthroponyms from an etymological point of view. She retrieved most of the data from portal “Nomes no Brasil”, which provides open access to the names of Brazilian residents who participated in the 2010 census carried out by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). She argues that the etymology of those first names can shed light on the history, cultural influences, and migration flows in Brazil. The following data illustrate the diversity of Brazilian first names.

Some first names in use in Brazil are etymologically Greek¹¹ – they are names of philosophers and historical personalities, mythological names, and literary names: “Arquimedes”, “Dione”, and “Jocasta” are examples of each group, respectively. Some names of this type are found in the top-100 list of popular names in Brazil, such as “Alexandra” and “Sandra”. This list also includes Latin names such as “Antônia”, “Paulo”, and “Cícero”¹².

There are also Germanic names that date back to their prestige in the Middle Ages as a result of the Visigoth and Swabian influence in the Iberian Peninsula.¹³ The top-100 frequent names include, for instance, “Ricardo” and “Raimunda”.

Aramaic and Hebrew first names are also present, attesting to the influence of Christianity introduced in Brazil during the Portuguese colonization. Examples of biblical names are “José” (equivalent to Joseph in English), which ranks first on the top-100 male names, and “Ana”, which ranks second amongst the female names. Other names of various origins were introduced into the Brazilian anthroponymic repertoire under the influence of the Catholic Church, such as “Francisco” (the first name of 2 Catholic saints).

Indigenous first names were also found – they are Tupi names, such as female name “Irani” and male name “Moacir”. However, as Soledade (2019b) states, we cannot presume ethnic ties between these first names and their bearers, as 1) the catechization of indigenous peoples implied baptism, with Christian names being given to those peoples, and 2) indigenous names were given to non-indigenous people, becoming popular throughout the Brazilian territory regardless of their barriers’

¹¹ Most of the Latin words of Greek origin were formed in the Middle Ages or were introduced into the Portuguese language through the French or the English languages.

¹² In her article, the researcher lists Greek and Latin names in the category of names with a Latin background.

¹³ This historical explanation applies to several, but not all, regions of Brazil if we consider the places that concentrated people of Germanic origin from the early 19th to the early 20th century. In these contexts, records of etymologically German first names are not necessarily explained by the Portuguese medieval history.

ethnicity.¹⁴ Soledade's (2019b) study can be related to that by Martins et al. (2020): while the former points to a set of indigenous names (mainly of Tupi origin) in the Brazilian anthroponymic repertoire as registered by the IBGE, the latter brings evidence that some indigenous communities use non-indigenous names to the detriment of traditional names and name-giving practices.

African names are used even more rarely. Soledade (2019b) found only 7 of such names in the IBGE database, which covers names of people born from 1920 to 2009 – the female first name “Dandara” is the most frequent, and there is only one male name, “Jabá”, with 22 occurrences. She considers that this finding is related not only to the compulsory renaming experienced by the African slaves as part of a depersonalization process that used to start even before their arrival in Brazil¹⁵, but also to a current structural racism experienced by parents who want to give their children an African name¹⁶, as they are advised in the register office to choose “more ordinary” names as shown in a news article published in Brazil in 2014.

Soledade (2019b) also considered immigration flows in her study of first names – more specifically, she explored the largest displacements of Italian, German, Japanese, Syrian-Lebanese, and Spanish individuals to Brazil from the early 19th century to the mid-20th century. She mapped the immigration history of these peoples and related it to the introduction of first names of different origins. Examples of female and male first names in the IBGE database include: “Alessandro” and “Andreia”, of Italian origin; “Evelise” and “Klaus”, of Germanic origin; “Hiroshi” and “Akemi”, of Japanese origin; “Iasmin” and “Omar”, of Syrian-Lebanese origin; and “Juan” (also spelled “Ruan”) and “Anita”, of Spanish origin. Like Tavares de Barros, Santos Heidmann, and Philippsen (2020), Soledade's (2019b) account of the Spanish

¹⁴ Soledade (2019b) warns that name-giving practices in place in indigenous villages are a research gap to be filled.

¹⁵ On name-giving practices in colonial Brazil, see Jean Hébrard (2003).

¹⁶ In view of the research gap pointed out in footnote 16, Soledade (2019b) does not say anything about whether resistance to register names of African origin would also occur for names of indigenous origin (e.g., first names from the Macro-Jê language stock).

immigration to Brazil shows that it is possible to map the history of a nation through the etymological analysis of first names and surnames. However, etymology and ethnicity can be divergent – as shown by Martins et al. (2020) for surnames borne by indigenous people in Brazil, there might be no correlation between etymological origin of a name (Spanish) and the ethnic origin of its bearers (Indigenous).

This non-correlation is more evident in the case of first names of French origin and of American origin, which are usually given because of the prestige of these languages and their speakers. The French influence in Brazil dates to the colonial era and intensified from the 19th century to the mid-20th century, with the United States becoming hegemonic in terms of economy, culture, and science after World War 2. Such a French influence is noticeable not only in names of French origin¹⁷, such as “Simone” (female) and “René” (male), but also in the formation of female first names ending in “-ete” and “-ane”. Evidence of the influence of American culture and the English language is the male first name “Charles” and the female first name “Jennifer”. The American influence also shows in the use of the endings “-son”, “-ilson”, “-elson”, “-erson”, and “-irson” in first names.

Finally, Soledade (2019b) reports on first names coined in Brazil, which she considers as Brazilianisms. Building on the IBGE data, she noticed that the creation of first names began in the 1930s and the 1940s. A part of these first names – more common amongst women, but rarely used – comes from common nouns, such as the female first name “Luz” (light), or from toponyms, such as the male first name “Júpiter”. Another set of names coined in Brazil includes those formed by spelling changes, such as female first name “Derenice”, which comes from “Berenice”. There are also official first names formed by hypocoristics, such as “Zé” (short for “José”)¹⁸.

¹⁷ It does not mean that all these first names are French in nature, as it is known that French names come from pre-Roman, Latin, and Germanic languages, to name but a few.

¹⁸ A hypocoristic can be understood as an item formed from a morphological change of another anthroponym. Generally used in family contexts, it differs from the nickname by having its origin in another first name (AMARAL, 2021, p. 72).

Further morphological processes used to form the first names include: juxtaposition, agglutination, prefixation, splinter¹⁹, lexical blending, and others of unidentifiable formation. These processes can be illustrated by their most frequent names. While the male first name “Josenilton” was formed by the juxtaposition of first names “José” and “Nilton”, the male first name “Ivanilton” was formed by agglutination of first names “Ivan” and “Nilton”. The female first name “Edneia” contains the Germanic left margin formative²⁰ “Ed-”, while the female first name “Marilza” contains the Germanic right margin formative²¹ “-ilza”. Splinter refers to names formed by word fragments that are not morphemes but function as such (e.g., male first name “Francivaldo”, which contains “Franci-” serving as a left margin affix, and first name “Cleverson”, which contains the fragment “-erson” working as a suffix). An example of lexical blending is the female first name “Valdilane”, formed by male first name “Valdir” and female first name “Elane”. Finally, an example of a first name originated from an unidentifiable formation process is “Car”.

Corroborating Soledade’s (2019b) study of Christian names in Brazil, Seide (2021) provides an etymological analysis of a set of first names. Instead of using the IBGE database, Seide used questionnaires applied to 132 students and trainers from the undergraduate program in language and literature in university campus Marechal Cândido Rondon in 2018. Her sample contained 48 Christian-related first names. She grouped these first names in 5 sets based on lexicographical information from dictionaries Guérios (1981) and Oliver (2010). Set 1 contains Hebrew, Greek, or Latin names with religious etymological meaning, such as female first name “Ângela”. Set 2 contains Hebrew names from the bible, such as male first name “Benjamin”. Set 3

¹⁹ “Splinters are non-morphemic word breaks that serve as true affixes and generate a series of words; they occupy either the left or the right margin in new lexical items” (SOLEDADE, 2019b, p. 445). Original in Portuguese: “Os *splinters* são quebras não morfêmicas de palavras que passam a atuar como verdadeiros afixos e geram uma série de palavras, ocupando as mesmas posições (margem esquerda ou direita) na construção dos novos itens lexicais.”

²⁰ I.e., in initial position like a prefix.

²¹ I.e., in final position like a suffix.

contains names related to Jesus Christ and his family, such as female first name “Cristina”. Set 4 contains first names related to the apostles, such as male first name “Lucas”. Set 5 contains first names that refer to Catholic saints, such as female first name “Rita”.

Another study related to Soledade’s (2019b) analysis of names with spelling changes (Brazilianisms) is Grespan and Seide (2013), who found this phenomenon in their analysis of first names formed by 2 lexical items. They used a sample of 600 birth certificates from the register office in the Municipality of Toledo, State of Paraná (more specifically, 100 certificates from each decade from the 1950s to the 2000s). They found first names containing the letter groups “ll”, “yh”, “th”, “dj”, “ff”, and “nn”, and the letters “k”, “y”, and “w” in the 1990s. Examples include the first names “Wellica Samara”, “Hendria Nicole”, and “Kaio Lenon”, all of which were registered in the 2000s.

Another phenomenon considered as Brazilianism by Soledade (2019b) is the use of hypocoristics as official first names. This phenomenon was also observed by Seide and Petrulionė (2020), who compared the use of hypocoristics as official primary names in Brazil and Lithuania. They compared the list of originally hypocoristic first names reported by Monteiro (1981) to the IBGE database and found that these names are very rare. Then, they analyzed the frequency of use of 3 popular names in Brazil: “Roberto”, “Aparecida”, and “José”. The hypocoristic forms “Beto”, “Cida” and “Zé” were much less used than the original names. Considering the use of hypocoristics as official first names chronologically, there was a trend of decreasing use from 1980 to 2000.

Four later studies by Soledade or Soledade and colleagues were found that addressed other morphological processes of first name formation. Simões Neto and Soledade (2018) studied names ending in “-son” in the lists of candidates approved in the entrance exam of Universidade do Estado da Bahia in 2016 and 2017. The etymological and morphological analysis of this formative showed that it comes from a patronymic (equivalent to the patronymic “-sen” of the Norse languages) used in the

composition of surnames in the English language. A comparison to the IBGE database pointed to records of names with this ending even before 1930 (e.g., male first name “Jefferson”). The use of names with this ending was also observed in later decades until the 1990s. These were names created in Brazil – for example, “Gleison” (registered in the 1950s), “Jandesson” (in the 1960s), and “Naisson” (in the 1990s). The database contained names with endings “-elson” and “-ilson”, such as “Joelson” (recorded in the 1930s) and “Renilson” (in the 1940s), respectively.

Soledade (2019a) resumes the findings reported in Simões Neto and Soledade (2018) and carries out another analysis of the data reported in Soledade (2019b). She observed the frequency of name-creating processes over time and the Brazilian state where neological first names were used the most: until the 1970s and, more frequently, in the states in the Northeast. Soledade, Santos Rodrigues and Simões Neto (2020) corroborates the findings published in 2019 by investigating anthroponyms from the State of Bahia in several sources covering the 19th and 20th centuries: a list of candidates admitted in a state university in Feira de Santana, a list of candidates admitted in Universidade Federal da Bahia, wedding record books, lists of member applicants to a Catholic religious order, and a list of applicants to Sociedade Protetora dos Desvalidos (Society for Protection of the Disabled)²² in the Municipality of Salvador.

Soledade (2019b) showed that one of the etymological origins of the first names in use in Brazil is the Spanish language and related the use of such names to the Spanish immigration in the pinnacle of the Brazilian coffee plantation era. The present systematic review of literature also found 2 other studies on official first names in Brazil and in Spain. Seide and Frai (2019) analyzed whether female and male first names considered as new (“fad”) in the Spanish anthroponymic repertoire (according to a news report published in 2009) were also used in Brazil in the same period and/or

²² This society was organized by Afro-Catholic descendants with the aim of providing mutual assistance to the freed slaves.

showed a frequency pattern²³ throughout different periods. Their data sources were the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE – Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística) and the Spanish Institute of Statistics (INE – Instituto Nacional de Estadística). The findings showed that out of 9 fad female first names in Spain in 2009, 4 were out of use in Brazil, 2 were used in both countries but in different periods, 2 were very rare in Brazil, and only 2 were fad names in both countries in the same period (i.e., "Valentina" and "Chloe"). Seven out 10 male names were used similarly in the countries at the same time, with spelling changes in 2 names: 1) "Tiago" (standard form) and "Thiago" (non-standard form), with the non-standard form being the most frequent, and 2) "Rayan" (original English spelling), "Raian", and "Raian", with the latter being the most used form.

Using the INE and IBGE databases quantitatively and qualitatively, Fernández Juncal and Seide (2021) showed convergences and divergences in the Brazilian and the Spanish anthroponymic repertoires. In fact, the study pointed to a gradual distancing between the repertoires: while 60% of male and 50% of female first names converged in the period before 1930, these figures dropped to 15% and 20%, respectively. The convergences found in the period as a whole are mainly due to the Catholic influence in both countries and refer both to fully homonymous names (e.g., male first name "George", and female first name "Sandra") and to names with Portuguese or Spanish spellings (e.g., female first name "Vanessa" in Portuguese and "Vanessa" in Spanish, and male first name "Joaquim" in Portuguese and "Joaquin" in Spanish).

Seide and Petrulionė (2018) compared the most used male first names in Brazil and Lithuania based on online statistical data from the IBGE and the Valstybinė lietuvių kalbos komisija (VLKK – Lithuanian Language Commission). They compared the 17 most popular male names from 2006 to 2017 in Lithuania and from 1990 to 2000

²³ The frequency pattern was typical of fad first names: their increased frequencies were sudden and continuous for 2 to 3 decades, after which they dropped.

in Brazil. Four first names were found in both lists, all of which were Christians (e.g., male first names “Mateus” in Portuguese, and “Matas” in Lithuanian).

3 Analysis of the studies found in the systematic review of literature

The first research question addressed in this systematic review of literature was: What are primary official first names like in Brazil? This is a qualitative question, i.e., there was no concern about quantifying the use of names to find out which are more frequent or whether a given type of name is frequent, rare, or more typical of a given state or region in Brazil. Setting such quantitative concerns aside, some conclusions can be drawn from the set of studies reviewed.

The surnames of Brazilians are very diverse in their origin and language: either because they reveal the history of the bearer’s paternal ancestors or because they reveal a period in their bearers’ history, as is the case of indigenous surnames that stray away from indigenous practices. No study was found on surnames of African descendants; it is known, however, that in these cases, the inherited surname was that of the enslaver’s family (MARIANO, 2013). Thus, while for descendants of indigenous peoples and of enslaved Africans there is no clear relationship between etymological origin and ethnic origin, a relationship can be found for other people in Brazil and indicates past migration flows, both domestic and international. A domestic example is the Italian names and surnames, which date back to the Italian immigration to Brazil²⁴; an international example is the Iberian names in the Municipality of Iguatu, State of Paraná, which date back to the displacement of Spanish and Portuguese families from the State of São Paulo to the State of Paraná. The findings also show the adaptation of surnames to the Portuguese language at the orthographic, phonetic, and

²⁴ Brazilian studies on the influence of Italian immigration on the Brazilian anthroponyms include Filgueiras (2016) and Frosi (2014).

morphological levels, as is the case of the surnames of Lithuanian immigrants and their descendants²⁵.

The first names show great diversity, not only etymologically but also morphologically and orthographically. There are 2 types of first names: 1) conventional names, which are part of the Brazilian onomastic repertoire in a given period, chosen in harmony with local customs, and connected to religious or national traditions, and 2) unconventional names, which are those inconsistent with the previous ones and deemed as different and exotic (FELECAN, 2014).

Conventional names usually include 1) first names inherited from the Portuguese colonization that are 1a) etymologically of Latin, Greek, Germanic origin, or 1b) of Biblical origin with Aramaic or Hebrew etymology, and 2) first names of further languages connected to migration flows, as is the case of Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Syrian-Lebanese, and Spanish immigration to Brazil. Case 2), however, needs further investigation, considering that Seide (2015) pointed to little evidence of the use of etymologically Germanic first names by bearers of Germanic surnames in the Municipality of Marechal Cândido Rondon, in the western region of the State of Paraná. Conventional names also include some Tupi and some African names, as well as some names introduced to the anthroponymic repertoire over the last century due to the cultural influence of France and the United States.

Unconventional first names include those with spelling changes, neological names, and hypocoristic names. The research data that make up this systematic review of literature, however, do not allow conclusions either on the use of these 2 categories of names from a quantitative point of view or on the distribution of their use in space for reasons that are explained below.

²⁵ In general, and considering different immigration contexts, language adaptation can occur at the initiative of the person who registered the passengers on the ships that brought the immigrants, the clerk who makes the records in register offices, or even by anthroponymic language policies of the home country and/or the host country (SEIDE, 2020c).

The second research question of this systematic review of literature was: How have primary official names in Brazil been explored in previous publications? To answer this question, the studies found were assessed as to the source(s) used, their object of linguistic analysis, their levels of linguistic analysis, their scope of research, the approach used, and their research nature.

Table 1 shows that nearly half of the studies were based on data provided by the IBGE and only one used more than one data source. The immediate access to statistics on first names registered in Brazil provided by portal “Nomes no Brasil” explains not only this finding, but also the preference for the study of first names formed by one lexical item or the first item in first names containing 2 lexical items (as the portal only provides the first name in these cases). This explains why few studies have addressed surnames, i.e., it requires access to further data sources.

Table 1 — Data sources used in the studies.

Sources	Articles
Names in Brazil IBGE, census 2010	Seide and Petrulionè (2018) Simões and Soledade (2018) Seide and Frai (2019) Soledade (2019a) Soledade (2019b) Fernández Juncal and Seide (2021) Seide and Petrulionè (2020)
Birth certificates	Vescovi (2021) Grespan and Seide (2013) Seide (2015)
List of students	Martins <i>et al.</i> (2020)
List of entrance exam candidates and Names in Brazil, IBGE, census 2010	Simões and Soledade (2018)
Questionnaires	Seide (2021)
Others	Tavares de Barros, Santos Heidmann, and Philippsen (2020) Seide (2020a)

Source: the author.

More than one in every 5 studies adopts at least two linguistic levels of analysis, with a predominance of the etymological level combined with spelling and morphological descriptions. The most studied linguistic level is the spelling level, followed by the morphological, with little research at the phonetic level.

Nine studies consider etymology, even if not exclusively. A significant number of studies (6) aim to identify and describe, whether exclusively or not, an anthroponymic repertoire (a set of names of people in a language or in a language community). Only 2 articles do not describe anthroponymic repertoires nor consider etymology in their analyses.

Table 2 — Linguistic description of anthroponyms according to the level of analysis.

Level	Articles
Etymology	Tavares de Barros, Santos Heidmann, and Philippsen (2020)
Orthography	Grespan and Seide (2013)
Morphology	Seide and Petrulioné (2020)
Etymology, orthography, and morphology	Simões and Soledade (2018) Soledade (2019a) Soledade (2019b) Soledade, Santos Rodrigues, and Simões Neto (2020)
Anthroponymic repertoire	Seide (2015) Seide and Petrulioné (2018)
Anthroponymic repertoire and orthography	Seide and Frai (2019)
Anthroponymic repertoire, orthography, and etymology	Martins et al. (2020) Seide (2020) Fernández Juncal and Seide (2021)
Anthroponymic repertoire and etymology	Vescovi (2021)
Orthography, phonetics, morphology, and anthroponymic repertoire	Seide (2020a)

Source: the author.

Most studies (8) have a national scope of research. Some involve 2 countries and provide a comparative analysis of countries, rather than regions or smaller locations within a country. They can be considered as international studies that focus on the national level. While national and international studies have been based on IBGE data, those at the local level are based on other sources, despite the possibility of collecting data by municipality on portal “Nomes no Brasil”.

Table 3 — Scope of Research.

Scope	Articles
National	Soledade (2019a) Soledade (2019b) Seide (2020a) Soledade, Santos Rodrigues, and Simões Neto (2020)
Local	Grespan and Seide (2013) Seide (2015) Simões and Soledade (2018) Martins <i>et al.</i> (2020) Tavares de Barros, Santos Heidmann, and Philippsen (2020) Vescovi (2021) Seide (2021)
Comparative (involving 2 nations)	Seide and Petrulionè (2018) Seide and Frai (2019) Seide and Petrulionè (2020) Fernández Juncal and Seide (2021)

Source: the author.

The studies provide quantitative and qualitative analyses based on name samples of different ranges and reach. However, considering the criteria adopted in quantitative research, the findings from statistically reduced samples should be interpreted with caution, as they are only evidence of a phenomenon.

Apart from Seide and Petrulionè (2018; 2020) and Fernández Juncal and Seide (2021), who report on more complex analyses, this limitation applies to all studies in this systematic review. Soledade (2019a; 2019b) and Simões and Soledade (2018) deserve special attention, as they were based on robust IBGE data, but provided no systematic account of the meaning of the number of occurrences. As such, it is impossible to conclude whether the findings indicate the recurrent use of a given first name or, in the case of little use, only its existence in the Brazilian anthroponymic repertoire.

Finally, all studies take into account the context or, in Soledade's (2019b) words, the socio-history of their data, which indicates multidisciplinary with History. Only one study, Soledade (2019a), also interface with Geography because of its concern with the distribution of first names in the national territory. Despite these interfaces with other disciplines, all studies start from a definition of proper name as a linguistic sign,

which indicates that researchers are affiliated to Onomastics in general and to Lexicology in particular within Linguistics.

This systematic review of literature also assessed the extent of employment of traditional research in Brazil, i.e., research focused on linguistic analysis (often etymological) of official primary names extracted from official documents. In total, 13 studies followed this research paradigm, as they are either centered on the description of anthroponymic repertoires and/or based on etymological analyses. It does not mean, however, that Brazilian research is restricted to this paradigm.

4 Conclusion

This systematic review of literature points to a predominance of research on first names over surnames. Further research on surnames is needed that includes the spelling and phonetic levels of analysis, considering that most of them have non-Portuguese or non-Brazilian etymology and have been adapted to the Portuguese language. It would also be interesting to develop research on how migrants and their descendants feel affected by spelling changes in their surnames due to language adaptations, as well as other social, political, and cultural aspects²⁶.

The present findings show that research on primary official first names has been usually local or national in scope, with only one study (SOLEDADE, 2019a) comparing the uses of certain first names between different regions of the country. The differences between Brazilian regions and the country's continental extension call for studies that account for such a diversity and compare regions and their respective states²⁷.

Finally, including all 44 articles in the initial list, 28% of the studies published in Brazil from 2011 to 2021 follow the research paradigm of describing the anthroponymic repertoire of official primary names and/or analyzing them

²⁶ An example of this is an ongoing research project that seeks to investigate how immigrants in Sweden feel about the adaptation of their surnames to the Swedish language (FRÄNDÉN, 2016).

²⁷ A study of this type is Choleva-Dimitrova et al. (2020), who compared anthroponymic data from 3 large Bulgarian cities (Sofia, Varna, and Blagovest) collected from 2007 to 2014.

etymologically. This indicates that tradition coexists with innovation, with a predominance of non-traditional studies (72% of the initial list). These articles, albeit not analyzed in this systematic review of literature, are innovative because they do not focus on official primary proper names and/or they are not etymologically based. Further research is needed to describe and evaluate them properly in the body of knowledge of Onomastics.

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