

NEW THOUGHTS ON THE HISTORICAL CONSTITUTION OF BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE

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ABSTRACT

The present paper aims at revising the main ideas that have been propagated in the academic field concerning the process of constitution of Brazilian Portuguese, whose identity and distance in relation to European Portuguese has long been observed. Moreover, it revives the discussion on the real dimension and role of African languages in the formation process of this linguistic variety in Brazil. To understand linguistic change, this study has sought to rekindle the issue to look beyond the albeit indispensable socio-historical and demographic data. Although studies that adopt the perspective that BP is a creole have yielded good results in the understanding of linguistic origins in the New World, such studies may have overestimated the occurrence of creoles in the southern hemisphere to the point of considering pidgins and creoles the only explanations of any contact that expanding languages might have had. Further and more detailed comparative studies on Bantu and Portuguese are required, which may provide new directions for research in this field.

Keywords: Language contact, Brazilian Portuguese and African languages.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the phonic and lexical realms and above all in morphosyntax, many identified and recorded characteristics have increasingly distanced Brazilian Portuguese (BP) from European Portuguese (EP). Today, this development has advanced to the point that when speakers of these languages come into contact with one another, they occasionally feel that they are speaking two distinct languages and no longer a common linguistic entity.

These differences are manifested more clearly in the “turf wars” to which people and therefore historical languages seem to always be subject. On the one hand, there is the myth of linguistic error or the corruption of

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phylogenetic origin that is generated by the confrontation with otherness. On the other hand, there is the overwhelming argument of demographic density and the size of geographical area, which represents a natural retaliation to the previous position.

The author does not wish to contribute to this endless struggle for ownership and power. However, in fact, there are significant differences between what are usually recognized as the two most widely spoken varieties of Portuguese: EP and BP.

The list of linguistic characteristics that differ between the languages is substantial and has been reviewed by many language scholars, for example, Houaiss (1985), Mateus (2002) and Mattos and Silva (2004a, 2004b), to mention only several recent studies. These authors argue from different perspectives for and against the unity of Portuguese in an increasingly relative way.

Meanwhile, Teyssier (1997, p. 97) asks a question that raises a crucial issue regarding historical linguistics and the empirical results that this science aims to achieve in understanding the formation of what is referred to by some as the Lusophone world: “How can the peculiarities of Portuguese Brazil be explained?” Although these peculiarities possess an allegedly conservative character in certain aspects, they oppose that conservatism with a surprising number and quality of innovative aspects, particularly those aspects that result from the grammatical symmetry that Brazilian Portuguese (BP) seems to share in certain ways with Portuguese lexicon-based creole languages.

Thus, in modern times, answers to this question have been eclipsed by different interpretative motivations in an effort to present a scientific explanation for the linguistic shape that Portuguese has assumed in South America.

These positions will be reviewed here without criticizing or favoring new assessments of the issue.

2. A BRIEF GLANCE AT THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKDROP OF PORTUGUESE

The following narrative is reflected in the *Carta de Caminha* (*Caminha's Letter*, which announced the discovery of Brazil to the King of Portugal):

(...)They were dark brown and naked,
and had no coverings for their private parts, and
they carried bows and arrows in their hands.
They all came determinedly towards the boat and
Nicolau Coelho made a sign to them to put down their bows,
and they put them down. But he could not speak to them or
make himself understood in any other way because of the waves

which were breaking on the shore. (...). (Cortês1967).¹

This passage expresses the understanding that it was not perhaps the waves of the sea but linguistic distance that separated the men. Although Cabral's fleet included so-called "tongues", as interpreters were known at the time, even for them, the Indians would be "people that nobody understood", as Caminha duly noted (Folio 6r). It was not in vain that before leaving for Calecute, Cabral left several representatives with the task of "better understanding what they were saying" (Folio 11r).

This fragment of *Caminha's Letter* represents what would have been the early stage of the reconfiguration and linguistic accommodation that would progressively operate in the New World.

If currently approximately 180 indigenous languages persist, it is "likely at the time of the first Europeans' arrival in Brazil (...) that the number of indigenous languages was double what it is today", as Rodrigues states (1994, p. 19).

Most of the Indians contacted during the first centuries of colonization on the coast spoke forms of Tupi and Macro-Ge, the two Brazilian indigenous language stems now recognized by most scholars. The idea spread among several authors - although not without controversy, of course - that until the political and linguistic intervention of the Marquis of Pombal in the mid-eighteenth century, a language generally based on Tupinambá - the language of the Tupi-Guarani linguistic family - would have been spoken along the entire length of coastal Brazil, in which the Portuguese dimension would initially only have been a supporting language.

One might recall that in 1595, little more than half a century after the publication of the first metalinguistic assessment of the Portuguese language, i.e., the *Gramática da linguagem portuguesa* (Grammar of the Portuguese Language) by Fernão de Oliveira, the *Arte de gramática da língua mais usada na costa do Brasil* (Grammatical art of the language most used on the coast of Brazil) was published by Padre Anchieta "for the better instruction of the catechumens and the increase of Christianity in those parts", as² Augustine Ribeyro claimed in the license to publish this work (Anchieta, [1595] 1981).

Despite all of the instructional efforts undertaken after this publication, the Indians were in fact exterminated. From comprising 50% of the population in the late sixteenth century, they were reduced to a tiny 2% at the close of the

¹ (...) heram aly xbiij ou xx homee)s pardos / todos nuus sem nhuu)a cousa que lhes cobrisse suas / vergonhas. traziam arcos nas mãos esuas see / tas. vijnham todos rrijos perao batel e nicolaao co / elho lhes fez sinal que posesem os arcos. e eles os / poseram. aly nom pode deles auer fala ne) ente) / dimento que aproueitasse polo mar quebrar na / costa. (...).

² Original text: "pera melhor instruição dos Cathecumenos, & augmento da noua Christãdade daquellas partes".

nineteenth century (Mussa, 1991, p. 163). To better assess the extent of this tragedy, in the twentieth century, 734,127 individuals identified themselves as indigenous according to a sample analysis of the 1991 and 2000 censuses (IBGE, 2006). Of the total population of 169.6 million inhabitants, Indians represent approximately 0.43%.

Following the well-known socio-historical scenario, the Indians were supplanted by the veiled but increasing influence of black Africans, who were shamefully enslaved in an institutionalized form of human brutishness.

From the early years of colonization initiated by Dom João III, slaves were brought to Brazil, initially by the thousands and then by the millions. Throughout the course of this trafficking, the language of these slaves belonged to only two linguistic stems, the importance of which is uneven in the socio-historical composition of the country.

From the Afro-Asian stem, Islamized blacks of the Chadic branch were introduced; not only just prior to the nineteenth century. They spoke the Hausa language and were substantially reduced in number as they performed tasks related to urban services, particularly in the Northeast region and Bahia.

However, most of the slaves spoke Congo Kordofanian languages that integrated two main branches of a single language family: Niger-Congo.

From the Kwa branch, the Ewe, Fon, Jeje-Mahi, Mina, Ijo and Yoruba (Nago) languages were prominent. From the Benue-Congo branch, Africans from the Bantoid group, particularly the Bantu subgroup (Kikongo, Umbundu and predominantly Kimbundu speakers), were present. As a commodity of prime necessity, these Africans were spread throughout Brazil during the long period of slavery (Pessoa de Castro, 2001).

The idea of the negative selection of the black Africans who were sent to the Americas is widespread because to be categorized according to this glossogenetic distribution, their grammatical bases would have been perhaps less distant from one another in terms of a linguistic analysis. However, for blacks, the ethnolinguistic mixture promoted must have been distressing.

In this scenario, one cannot fail to mention the constant arrival of new waves of Portuguese, the process of racial mixing and the strong presence of other European immigrants during the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. However, the spectrum of the latter factor should be considered in sectors, depending on how the diffusion of such immigrants occurred within the large territorial dimensions of Brazil.

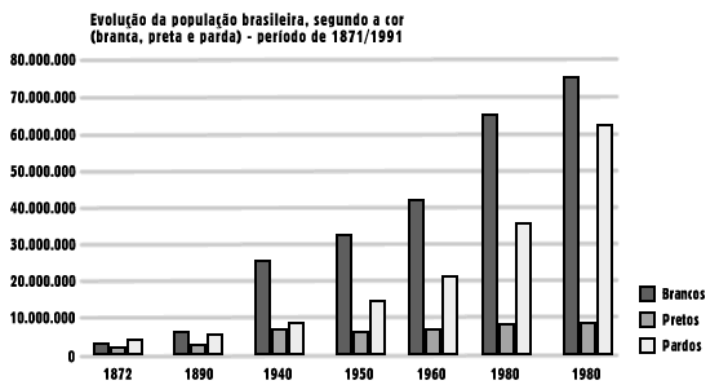
For an overview of the ethnic evolution of the Brazilian population of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, see *Table 1* and *Chart 1* below:

Table 1: Evolution of the Brazilian population according to color - 1872/1991

Color	1872	1890	1940	1950	1960	1980	1991
Total	9 930 478	14 333 915	41 236 315	51 944 397	70 191 370	119 011 052	146 521 661
White	3 787 289	6 302 198	26 171 778	32 027 661	42 838 639	64 540 467	75 704 927
Black	1 954 452	2 097 426	6 035 869	5 692 657	6 116 848	7 046 906	7 335 136
Pardo or Brown	4 188 737	5 934 291	8 744 365	13 786 742	20 706 431	46 233 531	62 316 064
Yellow (East Asian)	242 320	329 082	482 848	672 251	630 656
Not declared	41 983	108 255	46 604	517 897	534 878

(Source: REIS, 2000, p. 94)

Chart 1: Evolution of the Brazilian population according to color - 1872/1991



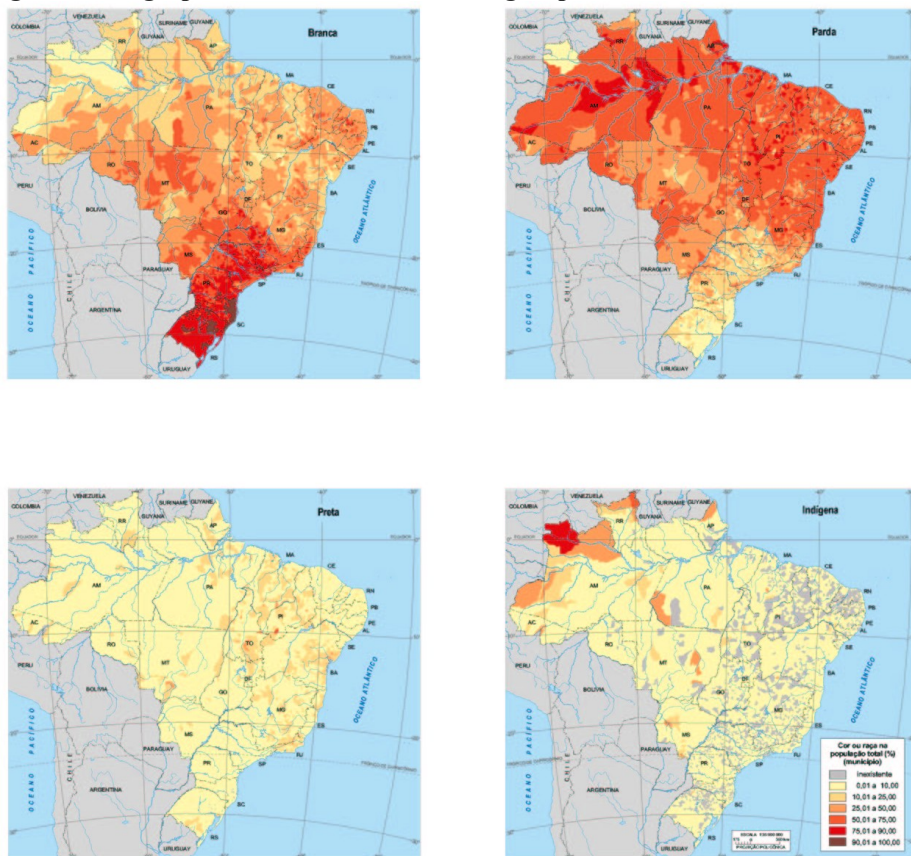
(Source: REIS, 2000, p. 94)³

An initial global assessment seems to indicate that those who preached and, through immigration, desired to promote the “whitening” of Brazil were successful in their endeavor, at least quantitatively. However, if the ethnic

³ Legend: Brancos = White, Pretos = Black, Pardos = Pardo or Brown

distribution is observed within Brazil, another interpretation is possible (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Geographical distribution of ethnic groups in Brazil



(Source: IBGE)⁴

The four maps represent (from left to right, top to bottom and clockwise) the white, brown, indigenous and black ethnicities and their distribution across Brazil. Except for the gray areas, which indicate a lack of ethnicity in the marked region, the darker the color is, the greater is the demographic density.

Thus, combined with the previously mentioned analysis of *Chart 1*, a whiter country is depicted with an increasingly obvious brown population. However, the distribution is hegemonically reversed. That is, we perceive a country inside out: much whiter in the south and more colored or mestizo in

⁴ Legend: Color or Race in Total Population. Branca = White, Preta = Black, Parda = Pardo or Brown, Indígena = Indigenous. Gray = Does not exist.

the north. As we know, the remaining Indians took refuge between the Cerrado and the Amazon region.

These data on the social scenario of the first centuries of Brazil's linguistic identity formation, which are only briefly summarized here, provide an indispensable educational tool.

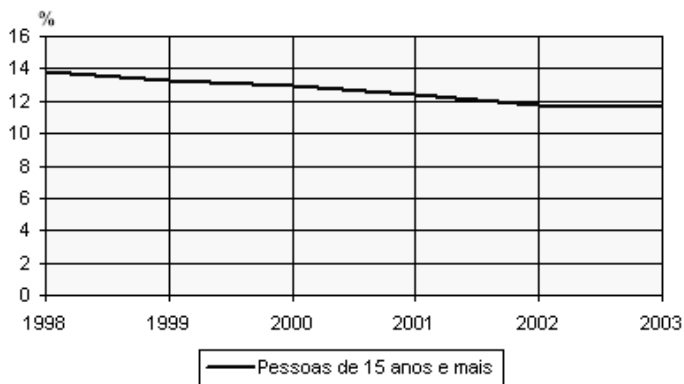
Mattos and Silva belong among the authors who argued that we cannot think about and better understand the stages of the historical constitution to which Brazilian Portuguese has been subjected throughout its formation in Brazil if this factor is not considered (together with historical demographic and mobility data).

It may be pertinent to ask how Portuguese could have remained unscathed within the multilingual and multiethnic context that has characterized its development in Brazil.

Serafim da Silva Neto ([1950] 1975, p. 118) was familiar with the ideas of his time and sincerely defended his worldview. He believed in an alleged "victory" of the Portuguese language that as a "progressive oil slick", it was superimposed over the other linguistic realities, including what he referred to as the "adulterated language of blacks and Indians" (1960, p. 21). In his words, such linguistic realities "were not only transiently imposed: all who were able to acquire a school culture and, therefore, had the prestige of literature and tradition, reacted against [them]."

However, the history of schooling in Brazil, reports the opposite outcome. Ribeiro (1999) indicates that in the late nineteenth century, 85% of Brazilians were illiterate.

Chart 2: Illiteracy rates in Brazil (Source: IBGE)⁵



Even if the illiteracy rate has substantially improved, as recent data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (Instituto Brasileiro de

⁵ Legend - People aged 15 and over. X axis: 0-1 years education, 1 to 3 years, 4 to 7 years, 8 to 10 years, 11 years +.

Geografia e Estatística - IBGE) suggest, even today, the literacy statistics remain bleak (*Chart 2*).

A priori, this improvement may be a cause for encouragement, particularly because of the descending illiteracy curve. However, *Chart 2* does not express the country's reality as a whole. It only represents the layer of the population without any formal education and does not consider the functionally illiterate, i.e., those who despite having attended an educational institution for three, four or five years can barely sign their names. The public schools have never played their role properly, particularly during and even after the period of military dictatorship (1964-1984), which reveals the bankruptcy of their educational program.

Chart 3 presents a less distorted view of the issue.

Chart 3: Schooling rates in Brazil by years of attendance and gender in the 2000 census (Source: IBGE)

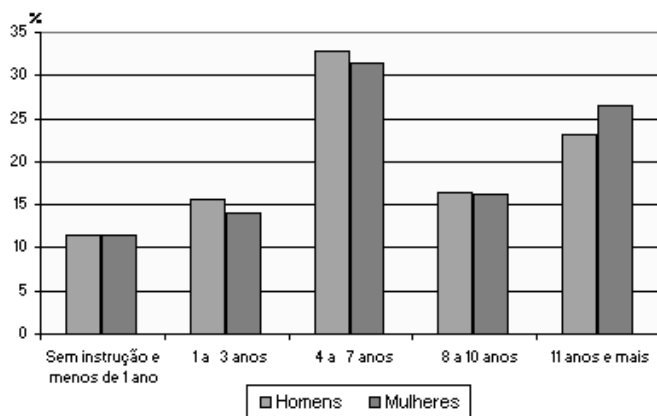
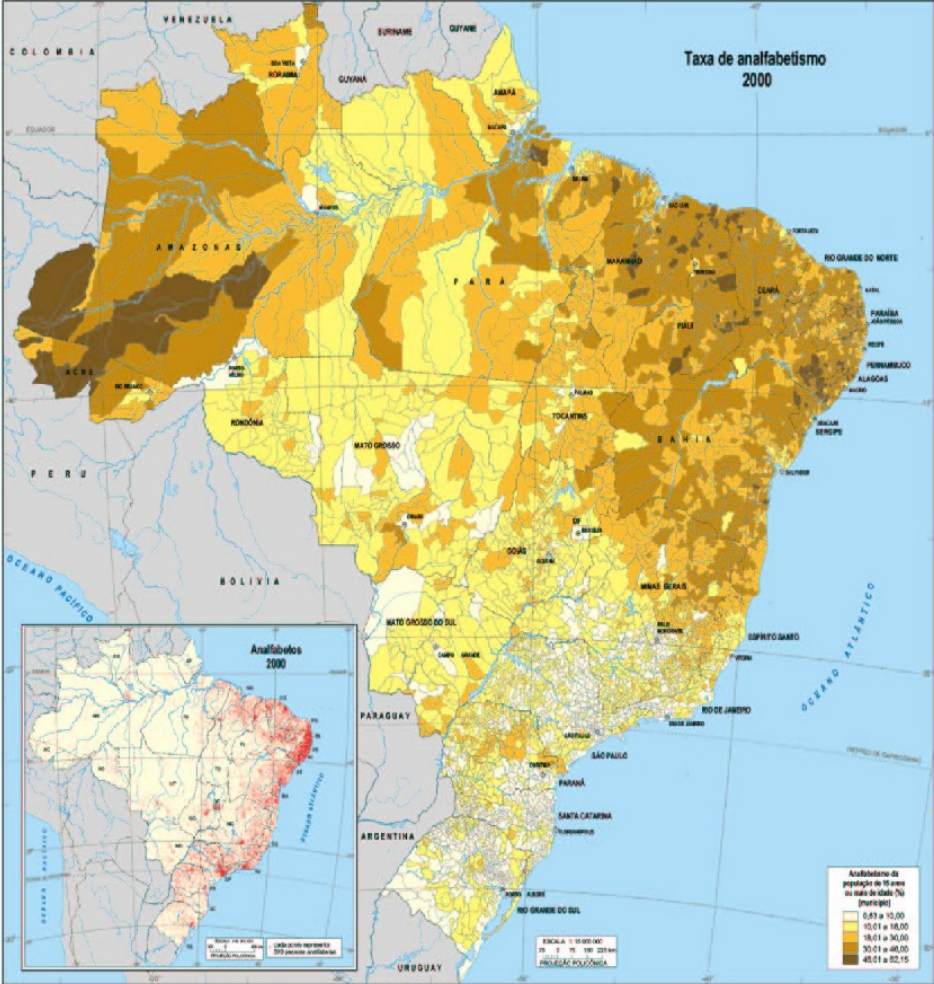


Figure 2 shows a more precise representation of the problem of education in Brazil, particularly in relation to the issue of linguistic standardization and access to information by the population.⁶

⁶ Taxa de analfabetismo = Illiteracy Rate, 2000. Escala = Scale. Cada ponto representa 500 pessoas analfabetas = Each point represents 500 illiterate individuals. Projeção policônica = Polyconic projection. Legend title: Illiteracy rate of population aged 15 or more.



Therefore, illiteracy levels seem to reproduce the obverse and the reverse of what is established between the white and brown populations, as shown previously in the maps of Brazil’s ethnic distribution (*Figure 1*).

However, it is curious that even under these circumstances, regardless of the level of education, several phenomena commonly identified as dissonant between EP and BP are generally used extensively by both layers of the Brazilian population, for example personal or oblique pronouns in an accusative function – a result of the disappearance of certain clitics - strategies for the construction of relatives, the deletion of the direct object and the stiffening of the subject/verb order, even in interrogatives.

Nevertheless, as Mattos and Silva (2004b: 131) state, “in Brazil there has always most likely been more than one Portuguese”. That is, Brazil’s history

is characterized by diglossia, the genesis of which has different reasons. In the following, the explanatory hypotheses regarding the formation of popular Brazilian Portuguese are reviewed.

3. DIFFERENT VIEWPOINTS

In the incessant and expansive reconstruction work that historical linguistics has undertaken in Brazil, three positions have been the most common in the fight for the pretentious honor of uncovering the past of the Portuguese language. Generally, on one side, there are those who argue that popular BP has undergone a process of creolization, with subsequent decreolization towards EP. Then, there are those who believe that the changes undergone by the language in Brazil result primarily from a secular drift, already foreseen in the system, to which “a confluence of reasons” is juxtaposed. Finally, there are those who argue that Portuguese is the result of a process of irregular linguistic transmission that unlike creolization failed to produce a creole but a variety of the language.

The first hypothesis has remote origins in the ideas of Coelho in the nineteenth century, which were based primarily on the lack of agreement in the noun phrase (one of the most visible and stigmatized phenomena of the language, even internally in Brazil). The hypothesis found strong support in the twentieth century from Guy (1981), who even after his arguments were harshly refuted by Tarallo (1993) continues to collect lexical, phonetic and syntactical data that consolidate his position in debates at national and international conferences.

This hypothesis is also supported by Holm (1992), who views popular Brazilian Portuguese as a semi-creole and defends his position to the point of replacing the traditional question “Was Portuguese creolized in Brazil?” (proposed by Guy) with “How could it be possible to avoid creolization?” (1981, p. 309).

Holm believes that internal differences within BP, which subdivides into Popular Brazilian Portuguese (PBP) and *Standard* Brazilian Portuguese (SBP), are structurally much greater than between *Standard English* and the North American variety of *Black English*.

The author denies the existence of a general language of indigenous basis in Brazil during the early centuries, which would in his view have been a somewhat creolized Portuguese, and proposes that this creolization would not have had its origin in Brazil but in São Tomé⁷, where the creole used in Brazil during the Sugar Cane Cycle originated.

According to Holm, phonological, syntactic and lexical traces connect the creole of São Tomé to PBP, as one would expect:

⁷ São Tomé and Príncipe is located in the Gulf of Guinea.

a) in phonology, the consonant-vowel (CV) syllable structure, which provided the syncope or apocope in elements such as *negro* > *nego*, *voando* > *voano*, *dizer* > *dizê* and the *-s* ending in different words; the process of palatalization before the anterior high vowel [i], which, according to the author, is as regular in this creole as in PBP; the alternation between the alveolar lateral approximant [l] and the alveolar flap [R] in PBP, the presence of which is attributed to that creole, in which these elements would be allophonic.

b) in morphology and syntax, the notable lack of movement in interrogatives that is unparalleled in creole languages; the construction of relative, chopping or copy structures in statements such as *O sorvete que eu gosto* or *A menina que eu briguei com ela*; the double negation before and after the verb phrase, such as *Ele não sabe não*; the drastic reduction of verbal forms and tenses; the modification of the preposition *em* in the form *ni* by analogy with the homophone preposition *ni* of the Yoruba, all of which belong, according to the author, to the creole of São Tomé.

However, Alan Baxter (1995) and Dante Lucchesi (2003) disagree that a widespread creolization of Brazilian Portuguese occurred. If this process had occurred, they say, it would have been in sectors, or geographically delimited environments, in which the population density and conditions of access to the target language justified such an occurrence. These authors have sought to demonstrate this argument in their research on isolated rural communities, for example, Helvetia in the southern state of Bahia.

Lucchesi (2003, p. 272) postulated that “structures of popular Brazilian Portuguese, that result from change processes induced by contact between languages”, do not transform “this linguistic variety into a creole language, or even an independent variety of its target language, *standard* Portuguese”. For Lucchesi (2003, p. 273), the explanation for BP’s shape is based on a dialectic between what he terms “functional expansion and grammatical expansion” through which from a socio-historical perspective the acquisition of Portuguese language in Brazil passes at any given moment in the sense of an irregular linguistic transmission (ILT).

ILT differs from creolization because of the constancy or switching of the socio-demographic configuration and of levels of access to the target language, which may facilitate the emergence of a new natural language in different ways, for example, with respect to a new grammatical structure (which would constitute a creole) or the emergence of a new variety of the same language, depending on the temporary conditions of more or less robustness of data that are available during acquisition.

The issue seems to be delicate and extremely complex to analyze. How would one define the actual status of Port Wine: a variety of Portuguese wine, similar to a wine from a specific region (e.g., Dão, Bairrada, Douro, Vinho Verde or Alentejo)? Or is Port Wine a new wine-based drink, the identity of

which is established through “contact “with *aguardente* (a neutral grape spirit) during fermentation?

In fact, to what extent is the concept of language inherently linguistic? What is the size, the measure and the volume of data required to distinguish one language, a variety or a dialect, if sociopolitical assessments are not used?

In defense of his proposals, Lucchesi (2003, p. 278) offers a framework in which he ranks the intensity of linguistic contact to define the actual scenario of irregular linguistic transmission. Based on this framework, there are five characteristics that may be correlated with Brazilian Portuguese, which we reproduce analytically below.

The first characteristic relates to the “elimination of certain more abstract grammatical devices and restricted use of the target language,” to which are associated the phenomena of eliminating second-person markings in verbal inflection, generally in Brazil, and the absence in PBP of the use of subjunctive structures. Then, there is the issue of agreement in a noun phrase (NP) and between an NP and a verb phrase (VP) that originates in the process of “maintaining variation in the presence/absence scheme of the grammatical device of the target language.” The third characteristic concerns the “change in frequency of use relative to the marking of certain syntactic parameters”, which is exemplified principally by the loss of verbal movement in interrogatives and the more constant lexical filling of the subject. The fourth characteristic relates to “rebuilding the grammatical structure of the target language, eliminating or reducing variation on a small scale”, which attempts to associate with the likely preservation or restoration of the nominal morphology of the genre. The latter is the “maintenance of variation in the use of grammatical device within a ternary variable structure with the variation of the target language, a variant originating from an original process of restructuring the grammar and variant zero”, i.e., cases such as those that relate to the verbal system, particularly bitransitive verbs, e.g., “give”, in which the dative can be introduced by a preposition without the morphological assigning of case, as is typical in EP, or immediately after the predicate without the use of a preposition, as occurs in English.

However, for Naro and Scherre (2003, p. 290), the shape of Portuguese in Brazil “can be compared with the stage seen in documents existing in the period before colonization” and would not have been the result of an irregular linguistic transmission process or creolization. That is, BP does not present “new structural features induced by contact between languages” or by nativization “between segments of speakers of other languages and their descendants” (*id.*: 295). For Naro and Scherre, BP is the result of “spreading structures and variations” (*id.*: 296) that exist in the history of the language, the frequency of which is changed as the result of a confluence of reasons.

In forming their idea, Naro and Scherre focus in particular on the issue of number agreement between the NP and VP or within the NP and in the lexical

filling of pronouns in the subject function, which have been the center of discussion in most studies that address the subject.

Regarding the latter, these researchers explain that although certain authors relate the phenomenon to a compensation caused by the weakening of the verbal morphology paradigm, in BP, the explicit subject is actually “much less used when the verb marking is missing”. They present original quantifying data and that of other Brazilian researchers to support their theory. Moreover, they claim that this phenomenon is not a characteristic of creoles or pidgins.

In relation to agreement variability, which would be, according to Naro and Scherre, the only “candidate to have originated in the process of *irregular linguistic transmission*”, this variability is not an “exclusively Brazilian phenomenon” (2003, p. 293) because “the agreement between subject and verb in the third person plural was already variable in pre-classical texts, before the presence of the Portuguese language in Brazil” (p. 292). Moreover, according to the results of research conducted in Portugal, Naro and Scherre conclude that in the

modern standard language (...), exactly as in Brazil, verbal agreement mechanisms exhibit large areas of variation even in standard written contemporary European Portuguese: only the cases of subjects with one nucleus located close to the verb and without a plural adjunct are of truly categorical record in actual use in Portugal (2003, p. 293).

In short, for Naro and Scherre, the Portuguese language spoken in Portugal before the colonization of Brazil already had a secular drift in continuity with a pre-Romanesque drift, which was encouraged by the conditions found in Brazil (cf. NARO & SCHERRE, 1993). If in fact there was a creole language in the past, it soon disappeared from the sociolinguistic context.

4. ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE

Notwithstanding the previously described hypotheses, Mattos and Silva, in a communication presented at the conference *Brazil: Roots and trajectories*, which was held at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro in 1992, noted that

a reconstruction is yet to be developed that combines socio-historical, demographic and past and present linguistic factors that together may explain and mirror the socio-historical and linguistic processes that interacted in the creation of [Brazilian] Portuguese (1993 p. 77).

The state of the issue has changed since that conference, particularly between the mid-1990s and today, in relation to the understanding of demographic data and socio-historical factors as a result of far-reaching research and document editing, such as that initiated by the Brazilian Linguistics. However, the same has not been observed regarding the interlinguistic confrontation of Brazilian Portuguese with the languages with which it has come into contact for much of its history, unless, as we have observed, tangentially from creoles of a Portuguese lexical base.

Moreover, the idea spread that the linguistic influences of African and indigenous languages are summarized in the lexical range or, occasionally, in certain phonic aspects, particularly in explanations of the allegedly conservative framework of vowels in Brazil.

However, if one considers what was stated at the paper's outset in regarding African languages in relation to their contribution to the multilingualism of the Brazilian colonial period, one issue demands proper investigation: the role that the grammatical structures of African languages, *i.e.*, morphology and syntax, played in the formatting of Brazilian Portuguese, given the substantial interaction with such languages, including Kimbundu. Ultimately, of the 159 African etymology items identified in *Aurélio* (Ferreira, 1986), according to Peter (2002), 148 were related to Kimbundu, compared with only 11 Yoruba words, which provides an indication of Kimbundu's weight compared with that of other Niger-Congo languages.

Note that Mussa (1991, p. 145) shows that the Bantu language subgroup has always been in the majority in Brazil, representing 35%, 65%, 64% and 50% in the composition of all African languages in the territory during the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, respectively.

Mingas (2000) of the Agostinho Neto University in Angola, seems - it would appear - to have conducted the first research that relates Kimbundu and Portuguese interlinguistically.

Mingas's paper, *Interferências do kimbundu no português falado em Lwanda [Influence of Kimbundu on the Portuguese spoken in Lwanda]*, observes phonic and morphosyntactic aspects. Although, according to the author, the morphosyntactic aspects were less affected by contact than the phonic aspects, they represented in her view the most complex part of the research.

For Mingas (2000, p. 67), "it is easy to see the lack of agreement in number between the actualizers (the definite articles), and the nouns", as in *Os péO me dói* or *Vigia as criançaO*, because for Kimbundu speakers, the *-s* morpheme of the Portuguese number added to the determinant is "sufficient to indicate the name pluralization" (p. 67). This attitude is justified because Kimbundu is a prefixal language. Furthermore, the lack of number agreement between the NP and VP seems to result from the influence of the inflectional system of verbs in Kimbundu, which allows only one way for all individuals to speak. Regarding gender, because there is no difference between male and

female, bilingual non-educated individuals commonly construct possessives without the corresponding agreement, such as *Meu mãe, minha pai, meu terra*.

Regarding clitic positioning, “by interference of the same type of construction in Kimbundo, [in] which the pronoun is never enclitic as in Portuguese, but proclitic” (p. 72), the following examples may be noted, reproduced here:

- a) sô Paulo, **lhe** atropelaram na venida Brasil
instead of:
sr. Paulo, atropelaram-**no** na Avenida Brasil
- b) posso gritar, **lhe** prendem
instead of:
posso gritar, e prendem-**no** (p. 72)

Note that proclisis does not only occur preferentially in contexts in which EP demands an enclitic but also in the indistinct use of dative pronoun forms in accusative constructions, which the previous examples demonstrate.

Another important aspect concerns the use of the forms *tu* and *você* and pronouns that can be correlated in standard Lusitanian. According to Mingas, as in Kimbundu, there is no “ceremonious treatment for the third person singular, represented in Portuguese by /você/” (p. 74), and she argues that the speaker “confuses” them in use:

- c) Kaxena deve chamar **você** com o **teu** homem
instead of:
Kaxena deve chamar-**te** e ao **teu** homem (p. 74).⁸

Regarding the use of prepositions, because there are three locative forms in Kimbundu, *ku* (directional, place distinct and distant; interiority), *mu* (interiority) and *bu* (overlapping, on the surface), “which can equally be prefixed on pronominal and/or nominal bases to form noun phrases with spatial value” (p. 75), bilingual speakers of Portuguese and Kimbundu do not seem to differentiate the spatial functions of *para*, *em* and *a* and use them in variation, as in the following examples:

- d) Vão depressa **na** casa do camarada Nazário
instead of:
Ide depressa **ã** casa...
- e) Ainda antes de irem **na** cama

⁸ Our emphasis. The identification of examples does not conform to what is presented in Mingas's study.

instead of:
 Antes de irem **para a** cama

The characteristics presented here and noted by Mingas for the Portuguese spoken in Luanda are undoubtedly paralleled in Brazilian Portuguese. If Mingas is correct to consider the analyzed phenomena as the result of contact between Portuguese and Kimbundu in the sense of an interlingual interference, how can the same characteristics in the speech of Brazilians be explained?

Turning to eastern Africa, we can consider the research of Cuesta (1994), who aimed to investigate the use of Portuguese in Mozambique. The author indicates at the outset that

only 13% of Mozambicans speak Portuguese, either as a first language - 1.2% - or in alternation with one or more of the indigenous languages of the country - 11.8% - while 87% are monolingual or multilingual in African languages and dialects (p. 634).

According to the survey data, 99% of these speakers of African languages belong to the Bantu subgroup, which explains the similarities between the varieties of Portuguese spoken in Mozambique and Angola.

Considering the work of Couto, one of the most recognized Mozambican writers in Portuguese, Cuesta (1994) lists several characteristics, which he terms deviations, in many cases coincident with “those already incorporated in their writing by Brazilian and/or Angolan authors” (p. 638). In the following, several of the most relevant phenomena are discussed:

- 1) hesitation in treatment forms of the verbal 2nd person to 3rd person, i.e., the variation between *tu* and *você* in intimacy, whereas *você* is widely used for equal treatment between unknown persons;
- 2) free placement of clitics in either proclisis in main clauses or in enclisis in subordinate and negative clauses as in *O Continente se oceanifica* or *É por isso que atacam-nos* (p. 639);⁹
- 3) change, according to the Cuesta, in the regime of transitive verbs used as intransitive, as in the examples *Entraram, sentaram afinaram a vista* or *Eu hei-de passar a visitar*, which seem to relate more to the issue of the empty category for direct objects than properly to the issue of dependency (see item 4 below);
- 4) “the absence of the complementary direct personal pronoun or its replacement by the indirect, as in Brazil or Angola” (p. 639): *E o carro deixaste lá fora* or *Dizem que incertas vezes **lhe viram** passando montado*

⁹ Our emphasis.

num hipopótamo or even *Ela deixou lá o pilão, **deixou-lhe** no tal embaixo.*

- 5) the reduplicated use of negation elements, such as in *Nenhuma não houve* or *Ninguém não perguntou coisa **nenhuma***;
- 6) the use of *dele/dela* for *seu/sua*: *Entalaste a mão **dele**? Borboletou dois dedos à volta do botão da blusa **dela***;
- 7) “certain anarchy [sic] in the use or omission of prepositions” (p. 641): *Uma maozinha gorda **lhe** agarrou **na** gravata / e ouvi-los responder **no** outro lado da linha*;
- 8) change in the phrasal order: *E por que **esta toda** introdução, meu amigo? / Mas **nenhum** até agora foi capaz de ferir o rio e **deixar cicatriz nele escrita**.*

Among eight other morphosyntactic observations, there is, of course, an extensive list of “lexical Mozambicanisms” and derived and compound items (p. 641).

Although this text is evaluated from a perspective that is most likely not useful for linguistic if not literary analysis, it is curious to observe how several of the documented characteristics recur in the works of Brazilian and Angolan writers and not least in popular speech in Brazil.

Again, the question arises: to what extent have the Bantu subgroup languages contributed to the form that these non-European varieties have assumed in the southern hemisphere?

5. NEW GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH

Before seeking to defend one of the previously mentioned hypotheses, this study aimed to collect and publicize several ideas that have been proposed in academic research regarding the formation of BP, whose identity and difference from EP has long been discussed.

To understand linguistic change, this study has sought to rekindle the issue to look beyond the albeit indispensable socio-historical and demographic data. The literature review focused on studies on the languages with which Portuguese has come into contact, particularly African languages.

Although studies that adopt the perspective that BP is a creole have yielded good results in the understanding of linguistic origins in the New World, such studies may have overestimated the occurrence of creoles in the southern hemisphere to the point of considering pidgins and creoles the only explanations of any contact that expanding languages might have had.

Further and more detailed comparative studies on Bantu and Portuguese are required, which may provide new directions for research in this field.

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