

Trans-Atlantic Imbalances: Indexicality, Translingual Signs, and Power in the Portuguese “Global Nation”

ABSTRACT: Following the dissolution of the Portuguese Estado Novo regime and subsequent crumbling of the nation’s overseas colonial empire, the Portuguese state, media outlets, and many cultural elites fomented a narrative of a diasporic Portuguese “global nation,” looking to bring together the former imperial metropolis with the many Portuguese emigrant communities abroad. This essay will interrogate how marginalizing notions of center and periphery within this “global nation” play out in the realm of language. This marginalization along the lines of speech is carried out by dominant discourses surrounding “normative” and “orderly” linguistic practices and concomitant national identities that pervade and construct the global nation, including mass media and Portuguese-language education in emigrant communities. In this regard, what follows will examine the discrepancies in cultural value ascribed to lexical loans performed by metropolitan speakers in comparison to those of Portuguese emigrants abroad.

KEYWORDS: Luso-American, Portuguese Migration, Portuguese Language, Portuguese National Identity, Power, Ideology

RESUMO: Após a dissolução do Estado Novo português e a subsequente queda do império ultramarino, o estado português, meios de comunicação portugueses, e membros das elites culturais abraçaram e promoveram uma nova narrativa nacional posicionando Portugal, agora pós-imperial, como uma “nação global,” interpelando, assim, as numerosas comunidades de emigrantes portugueses radicadas no estrangeiro a participarem nesta reinvenção nacional, embora de uma posição liminal em termos de poder, privilégio, e prestígio social. Deste modo, o ensaio que se segue procura analisar alguns dos discursos marginalizantes, sobretudo, no domínio linguístico, que, por sua vez, produzem uma paradoxal presença simbólica e exclusão cultural no que diz respeito às comunidades no estrangeiro, designando práticas linguísticas “normativas” e “ordeiras” versus “ilegítimas” e “disordeiras” através de meios de comunicação e instituições escolares transnacionais.

Esta análise desenvolver-se-á em torno de uma comparação a nível de empréstimos lexicais entre falantes da metrópole e aqueles das comunidades portuguesas no estrangeiro.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Identidade Luso-Americana, Emigração Portuguesa, Língua Portuguesa, Identidade Nacional Portuguesa, Poder, Ideologia

Introduction

A 1977 editorial in the Portuguese newspaper *Diário de Notícias* proposed a rethinking of how Portuguese post-imperial national and cultural identity was to take on global specificities following the fall of the Estado Novo and the subsequent official dissolution of Portugal's imperial project: "O destino de Portugal nunca esteve como agora, tão intimamente ligado à capacidade do Estado para coordenar o intercâmbio cultural entre os portugueses do continente, das ilhas e das comunidades de emigrantes em países europeus ou americanos" (cited in Lourenço 118). In her exploration of the Portuguese State's fomentation of a "global nation" (54), Bela Feldman-Bianco outlines the objectives behind the creation of the Secretariat of Portuguese Communities after the Carnation Revolution: "a) strengthening the persistence of Portuguese language and culture in the world; and b) economic, social and cultural cooperation among Portuguese communities abroad as well as among those communities and the different regions of Portugal" (56).

Such a Portuguese "global nation" began to take shape through state initiatives, such as the access to citizenship for certain Portuguese descendents born abroad and the creation of the Instituto Camões, and Fundação Luso-Americana para o Desenvolvimento, which have played a vital role in the opening of community schools for Portuguese language and education in Portuguese enclaves abroad, as laid out in the first clause of the Secretariat of Portuguese Communities' mission statement. To these, we can add media initiatives from state and private television networks, such as RTP's *Contacto* and SIC's *Alô Portugal* or *+351*. Across such initiatives—state-driven or through private companies—one finds a primary focus on disseminating the Portuguese language as the core of the global nation. Sónia Ferreira underscores the presence of the Secretariat's mission in Portuguese media outlets geared toward Portuguese emigrant communities:

a língua e a cultura popular adquirem particular destaque na configuração de identidade portuguesa na diáspora, através do consumo de conteúdos mediáticos. Estes, quer seja como informação, entretenimento ou divulgação, ancoram-se numa suposta portugalidade pela língua [...] a questão que assume contornos mais expressivos é, sem dúvida, a que remete para a utilização da língua nacional.” (341)

The Secretariat’s mission statement, moreover, reads like a rehashing of the old Estado Novo nationalist/imperialist slogan “Portugal não é um país pequeno.” The mantra was often accompanied by a map superimposing Portugal’s colonies over the rest of Europe. The goal was to demonstrate that, along with its colonies, or “overseas provinces,” Portugal was comparable in size to Europe. The comparison with Europe continued to be relevant with the integration of Portugal into the European community and the nation’s insistent claims of global impact and historical clout. In a similar vein, the death of empire is assuaged by another form of expansion now centered on emigrant communities and individuals with cultural and/or biographical ties to Portugal. As with other expansionist projects, one finds here an assimilationist mission which is also the means through which the global nation will be formed; that is, “creating” Portugueseness.

It is in this sense that one finds the pedagogical and subjectivizing role of the Secretariat—not only teaching about Portugal, but how to perform Portuguese identity, a message sent from center (metropolis) to margin (emigrant communities abroad). This ideologically disseminated Portugueseness is further complicated by the nation’s transition from fascist imperial state to post-imperial democracy and insertion into late capitalist modes of production and consumption. In addition to symbolic and imperially nostalgic objectives, teaching Portugueseness and thus giving meaning to any ancestral connection an emigrant may have to Portugal, incurs significant revenue for both the State and metropolitan businesses through frequent travels to Portugal, investment in Portuguese financial institutions, or the purchase of real estate there. As the first objective underscores, a key instrument and criteria for the performance of Portugueseness concerns language. It is in the linguistic realm, therefore, that we can observe the formulations of center and margin in the “global nation.” What follows proposes an examination of how such notions play out in terms of linguistic production, looking specifically at the use of non-Portuguese words by speakers in both the metropolis and emigrant communities.

I have opted to refer to such words as translingual signs because of their ambivalent categorization across geographic sites within the global nation. The borders between different products of contact between languages, such as code-switching, loanwords, and nonce borrowing, have been an object of debate among scholars in different branches of linguistics. Shana Poplack, for instance, defines code-switching as “the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent” (“Sometimes” 583). A central component of code-switching, Poplack further argues in reference to the transition from Spanish to English among bilingual Puerto Rican subjects in New York City, is the preservation of (in this case) English phonological patterns (583). This is in contrast to English terms adapted to Puerto Rican Spanish patterns which Poplack attributes to monolingual Spanish discourse. A code-switch must, according to Poplack’s criteria, avoid either phonological, morphological, or syntactic integration into the base language—Spanish in the case of Poplack’s study, or Portuguese in the cases explored in this paper.

Some of the results of language contact considered here would, instead, be considered nonce borrowing, as in the case of an utterance further analyzed below from Lúcia Jorge’s novel *O Cais das Merendas*: “Aquele encontro não tinha nada a ver com as merendas, mas com os *parties*” (17). As Poplack explains, “the nonce loan tends to involve lone lexical items, generally major-class words, and to assume the morphological, syntactic, and often, phonological identity of the recipient language” (“Code-switching” 3). An example of “Portinglês” from Luso-American poet José Brites to be examined below offers a further complicated instance of nonce borrowing: “Na América, são *vaqueixas*” (337). Here, the nonce loan from the English “vacation,” undergoes a profound morpho-phonological adaptation into Portuguese, as indicated by the change in the final syllable from “vacation” to “*vaqueixas*,” arguably reflective of the Portuguese equivalent “*férias*” existing solely in the plural.

Nonce borrowing also differs from loanwords in that the latter are, due to widespread use, conventionally accepted into the recipient language and, therefore, more likely to be understood by most speakers of the recipient language. Like other, less official nonce loans, conventional loanwords have also undergone morphological, phonological, and syntactic integration into the everyday practice of monolingualism. As the larger excerpt from *O Cais das Merendas* will suggest, the nonce *parties* in Portuguese is understood by the novel’s main characters mainly through context clues. This liminal comprehension of Portugal’s

new bourgeois consumer vocabulary underscores the protagonists' (reconfigured) marginality within post-Estado Novo Portugal. The novel also marks a moment in the transition of some nonce loans into conventional loanwords, such as *hotel*.

What I wish to explore below has less to do with the different categories of inter-lingual contact than with the repercussions in terms of social power and privilege for using the results of this contact within the Portuguese diaspora. As this paper will explore below, the use of translingual signs among Portuguese emigrants comes into conflict with that of metropolitan speakers, and with the prerogatives of the Portuguese State to disseminate the official language, which is imposed "on the whole population as the only legitimate language" (Bourdieu 45). As I will consider below, part of reproducing the legitimacy of the official language implies establishing and consistently articulating a system of norms that regulates linguistic practices.

These norms ultimately reproduce notions of center and margin between different geographic and socioeconomic partitions of the Portuguese global nation in terms of "legitimate" and "illegitimate" speech. This divide can be seen precisely in the permitted lexical borrowing of metropolitan speakers and the delegitimization of the same phenomena among emigrant communities. One stark example of this inequity concerns a term for shopping mall used by metropolitan Portuguese speakers versus the term commonly used by Portuguese-Americans. In standardized Portuguese (in Portugal and the Lusophone world), the term *shopping* has successfully undergone the transition into conventional loanword, whereas the term *mall* used by Portuguese and other Lusophone emigrants in the United States in Portuguese utterances continues to be invalidated.

Drawing on the work of linguistic anthropologist Jane Hill (1999), in a different sociolinguistic context, the underlying argument that shall guide my paper posits that the transnational public space of the Portuguese global nation is constructed through (1) the persistent surveillance of othered (and therefore marginal) members of the global nation for linguistic disorder, such as "incorrect" lexical borrowing; and (2) the invisibility and/or conventional acceptance of almost identical signs in the speech of metropolitan speakers for which language mixing is "required for the expression of a highly valued type of colloquial persona" (Hill 680). The designation of lexical borrowing among Portuguese emigrants abroad as disordered speech (as in the case of *mall* versus *shopping*) reproduces, in other words, the cultural and socioeconomic liminality of such

speakers within the global nation. This marginalization along the lines of speech is carried out by the dominant discourses surrounding language and national identities that pervade and construct the global nation, including mass media and Portuguese-language education in emigrant communities.

Language, Ideology, and the *Luso- Subject*

To begin, we can think of the Portuguese state initiatives mentioned above as examples of transcontinental nationalism; a form of transnationalism that would suggest an interaction or movement across nation-spaces. Although there is a transnational component at work here, by creating Portugueseness across borders, it is a national consciousness that is institutionally and culturally (through media) disseminated across states. In terms of engendering consciousness, it is helpful to think of these initiatives as looking to interpellate, drawing on Louis Althusser (1972), a *lusu- subject*—referring to the nationalist adjective antecedent that which designates the host country (i.e. *Luso-American*, *Luso-Trinidadian*, etc). The *lusu- subject*, existing across different national/ideological spaces, is culturally formed in relation to the metropolitan Portuguese subject. In this sense, the Portuguese global nation, as an imperially nostalgic endeavor of national expansion, also very much recreates imperial notions of center and periphery, notably in linguistic realms. Such notions of otherness are themselves evident within the metropolis along the lines of urban/rural, southern and northern regions, class, race, gender, sexuality, age, and (dis)ability.

The aforementioned interpellation functions as “a hailing” (Althusser) that names and places the subject within the realm of ideology, where nationalism, as well as relations of power, exist. Interpellation into the Portuguese global nation does not negate the subject’s interpellation into other fields of meaning. Rather, several interpellations take place simultaneously, and it is how different interpellations interact with one another that will inform how the subject resides in the larger social world. In other words, it is the relationship between the *lusu- subject*’s different and overlapping interpellations—into birth country, production, race, gender, sexuality, etc.—that will inform their place in the global nation. The Portuguese global nation is not, then, its own discursive field, it exists within a larger global plane of meaning formed by historical movements of capital, bodies, and ideas. The relationship between the *lusu- subject* and the metropolitan hegemonic constructions of Portugueseness is thus born from these dimensions and concomitant interpellations.

The shaping of global Portugueseeness emanating from metropolitan cultural initiatives reproduces the centrality/hegemony of the metropolis while establishing the liminality of Portugueseeness in communities abroad. One of the ways through which this simultaneous hegemony and liminality is manifested and reproduced can be found in language, or in this case, in the interaction of languages. We can, in other words, pinpoint modes of othering in linguistic production, as well as the geographic and socioeconomic underpinnings of these, through the use of lexical borrowing in relation to standard Portuguese language, and adjacently, standard Portugueseeness. As Marxist linguist Valentin Voloshinov (1973) underscores, language and ideology (such as that of Portuguese global nationalism located within late capitalism) cannot be separated, as the former is the medium of the latter. More recently, the fields of sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, and semiotics have grappled, in different ways, with the connections between speech, language, and the construction of social meaning within which power and privilege are embedded and reproduced. In a similar vein to Voloshinov, Pierre Bourdieu demands that we treat language as “an instrument of action and power” (37) while arguing that linguistic exchanges “are also relations of symbolic power in which the power relations between speakers or their respective groups are actualized” (37).

Notably, in the subfield of linguistic variation—studying phonetic, lexical, morphological, and/or syntactic phenomena—which concerns us here, scholars such as Penelope Eckert have theorized that such variation and variables:

are not precise or fixed but rather constitute a field of potential meanings – an *indexical field*, or constellation of ideologically related meanings [...] Thus variation constitutes an indexical system that embeds ideology in language and that is in turn part and parcel of the construction of ideology. (454)

Lexical borrowing as a form of variation leads us to a larger consideration of the indexical field of Portuguese language use. Other examples of the concept of variation include particular varieties that are more or less identifiable, such as Rio de Janeiro Portuguese. Each variety may be made up of variables—speech practices that vary from those of other identifiable varieties—such as the pronunciation of /r/ in Rio de Janeiro. Studying the indexical field of Portuguese language use will, of course, carry implications not only for the Portuguese global nation, but for *Lusofonia* as well—designating the nations whose official language is Portuguese as well as diasporic Portuguese-speaking communities

around the world. Examining the indexical field of *Lusofonia* can serve as a useful tool for unpacking the imperial and exploitative legacies contained in the imagined collective and expressed through the politics of power surrounding variation in Portuguese. Such an undertaking is relevant not only to scholars working in different branches of linguistics, but also to those interested in questions pertaining to ideology and power, such as myself.¹

Discrepancies in Lexical Borrowing

Lídia Jorge's *O Cais das Merendas* (1982) brings to light the geographic and socio-economic underpinnings of hegemonic Portuguese-ness in the wake of Portugal's imperial demise—a time of cultural renegotiation regarding the imperial past and the possibility of integrating into Europe. The novel's protagonists, a group of Algarvian peasants, are confronted with the new everyday language of modern Portuguese-ness and international bourgeois consumption after leaving agricultural labor for employment at a trendy oceanfront tourist resort, the Hotel Alguergue, in the southern Portuguese region. The group, as metonymic representatives of pre-Carnation Revolution rural life, undergoes the erasure of past signifiers in favor of those pertinent to, and indicative of, a modernized post-imperial present guided by the development of the tourist industry that inserts Portugal into late capitalism's network of bourgeois consumption. In her reading of the novel, Helen Kaufman argues that the "hotel symbolizes 'modern' European culture that invades the Algarve and is expected to change the region. Although the Algarvians seek assimilation and seem, at least in theory, ready to join the modern world's progress, they find themselves alienated and lost" (172).

As the narrator reflects on a particular gathering during the tourist off-season in which the group of protagonists attempts to appropriate the lexicon of their "modern" consumers:

aquele encontro não poderia continuar a ser merenda. Porque merenda, como disse, sempre lembraria o tempo das ceifas, por exemplo, quando a dor de macaco tanto apertava o rim [...] Lembrava a era do trabalho sem hora, de sol a sol, o calor [...] Era preciso esquecer tudo isso... Aquele encontro não tinha nada a ver com as merendas, mas com os parties. (16-17)

The representation of everyday life of the Estado Novo era, embodied by the protagonists, is undergirded by imagery of rural peasantry and/or small land ownership; evoking a subject that resides temporally and spatially outside of the speech

that marks the present. In this sense, time and space in relation to labor, specifically rural/resort and pre-/post-Revolution dichotomies are conveyed in the novel via the relationship between characters and dominant modes of production and consumption. Through this lens, the aforementioned temporal and spatial dichotomies come to stand for developed versus undeveloped. Subsequently, in the idiom of hegemony, culturally normalizing and standardizing the dominant, the subjects emanating from the nation's rural areas are thus categorized through the frame of underdevelopment and backwardness. The other side of this frame is that of the global marketplace within which Portugal is now placed; its coastal areas now existing as a commodity to be consumed largely by an emerging national bourgeoisie and an existing international one.

In an approach similar to that of Pierre Bourdieu, Lídia Jorge connects the subject's existence within capital to modes of linguistic production. In the wake of the Estado Novo's fall, both of these have taken new directions. The protagonists move from rural subsistence-based production to the hospitality industry's production of tourist experiences. In being exposed to a new mode of production in terms of labor, they also confront a new mode of linguistic production, one to which they consider assimilating, yet from which they are largely barred. The linguistic production they encounter corresponds to the performance of a new (read post-Estado Novo), bourgeois Portugueseness that deploys the lexicon of international consumption, namely from English vocabulary. The word *estalagem*, for example, is replaced with *hotel*, leaving the narrator to observe: "bastaria o novo nome dado à coisa para a coisa se transformar" (55). The narrator connects this new reality of labor, language, and consumption to a geographic space now to be considered "a verdadeira Europa" (34). *Hotel* thus becomes a lexical prestige variant evoked in the performance of contemporary bourgeois notions of Europeanness. The aforementioned term *shopping* for shopping mall, instead of *centro comercial*, has arguably also entered conventional Portuguese language through its indexicality of post-Estado Novo bourgeois consumer culture. Meanwhile, the use of *mall* among Portuguese-American emigrants indexes, within the global nation, working-class migratory consumption, a subaltern subject-position in relation to the metropolitan middle-class.

The lexical borrowing in Jorge's novel now becomes part of the language of contemporary European Portugueseness, which simultaneously comes to linguistically embody the center of the Portuguese global nation. Access to this lexicon is, moreover, limited to existent bourgeois circles previously possessing

particular cultural capital, including those subjects that were able to access the signifying process of Portuguese nationhood—intellectuals, politicians, journalists, business magnates—through a variety of media. The privileged role in the realm of capital and production translates, in other words, into a prominent place in fields of cultural production, and is therefore reflected in linguistic production.

The *luso-* subject that is to be interpellated while residing abroad in Portuguese emigrant communities targeted by state-driven and private cultural initiatives occupies a place within labor and production that is similar to that of the hotel laborers in Jorge's novel. The Portuguese diaspora has largely been propelled by economic marginalization at home and subsequent occupation of unskilled labor in countries such as the United States (Klimt and Holton 2009), Canada (Klimt 2009; da Silva 2014), Germany (Klimt 2009), Trinidad and Tobago (Almeida 2004), Brazil (Rowland 2004), France (Leandro 1995; Cordeiro 1997; Carvalheiro 2014), among many others. One can thus observe a similar sociocultural dynamic between metropolitan elites and Portuguese émigré populations that we also see in Jorge's novel between elites and laborers. Additionally, the majority of Portuguese waves of emigration occurred prior to 1974, and was composed primarily of members of the rural working class, thus becoming inserted into the global flow of capital and migrant labor. As such, many Portuguese emigrants/*luso-* subjects, of multiple generations in some cases, are interpellated into a marginality of the diasporic nation, as they would have been had they resided in the metropolis; with language once again playing a prominent role.

As a result of contact with other languages throughout the Portuguese diaspora, many writers of the diaspora have incorporated code-switching and lexical borrowing into their literary works as part of emigrant experiences they look to convey. In exploring the relationship of Luso-American writers to Portugueseness and the Portuguese language, Christopher Larkosh describes their cases as “ex-centric Lusofonias”—“referring to that off-center space, mental flight, or exploration of geographical horizons, diasporic cultures, or other presumably marginal spaces, all of them hospitable to poetic imagination and intellectual discourse” (43–44). We can read further into and expand Larkosh's term to consider also how the center and margins of *Lusofonia* and the Portuguese global nation are constructed in terms of race, place, gender, sexuality, class, (dis)ability, age, religion, and most crucially for our study, linguistic production; and how these play out for *luso-* writers. The work of some Luso-American writers in

Portuguese has overtly named this marginality in linguistic production. This is the case with José Brites's poem "Emigrês e Portinglês"—the first term referring to Luso-American scholar and writer Eduardo Mayone Dias's coining of the term for lexical borrowing from the host nation's language(s) into Portuguese spoken by Portuguese (Dias 1989). Both terms, furthermore, seem to name a variety of Portuguese spoken in different sites of the Portuguese diaspora.

The tension between emigrant communities and metropolitan constructions of normative linguistic production is at the heart of Brites's poem.

A palavra é magia
 e sua ausência, a morte.
 Dos peitos, a alegria.
 A sonora é a mais forte.
 A escrita é o documento
 que sempre há-de comprovar
 qu' na história em cada momento
 se soube comunicar.
 Mas dos linguistas as queixas:
 "Se foram nossas esp'ranças!
 Na América, são vaqueixas...
 e na França são vacanças....
 Porque diabo o Mayone
 que dizem ser português
 anda armado em camone
 com isso do emigrês?!"

 Nós dizemos a tais fadistas:
 Como não há duas sem três
 - ca falamos portinglês! (337)

The poem effectively plots the marginalizing forces of metropolitan hegemony and voices resistance to it from the margin. Brites places this linguistic production within global Portuguese language, but asserts its validity against the assimilationist forces of standardized metropolitan Portuguese proliferated throughout Portuguese emigrant communities.

The poem begins with a perhaps romanticized view of the importance of language, only then to underscore the inequities that exist within it. Importantly,

especially for matters of power and symbolic capital outlined in the poem, the exposition of these begins with “mas dos linguistas as queixas.” We can argue that the poem refers to more than just strictly linguists, but to a larger set of social actors and subjects that serve as instruments of surveillance for standard language. Bourdieu locates even more specifically these actors and their relation to official language:

Produced by authors who have the authority to write, fixed and codified by grammarians and teachers who are also tasked with inculcating mastery, the language is a *code*, in the sense of a cipher enabling equivalences to be established between sounds and meanings, but also in the sense of a system of norms regulating linguistic practices. (45)

Furthermore, “linguistas,” and their role within the Portuguese “global nation” (including its systems of production), echoes Antonio Gramsci’s theorization of the relationship between intellectuals and hegemony (12). More than serving as the gatekeepers of “correct” Portuguese, the metaphoric linguists also reproduce the social rules and meanings—in this case linguistic norms—that prop up dominant modes of production.

The social actors and forces that rebuke certain lexical loans, such as those deployed by Brites, while permitting others, designate the parameters of adequate and orderly Portuguese-ness. The lexical loans with which Lídia Jorge’s characters grapple in *O Cais das Merendas* have largely become markers of cultural capital within the metropolitan and global markets of Portuguese language, while the loans used within emigrant communities are seen as incompatible with the image of Portuguese-ness established in the metropolis and disseminated politically and commercially throughout the diaspora. Brites makes this dissonance particularly clear: “Porque diabo o Mayone/que dizem ser português/ anda armado em camone/ com isso do emigrês?!” (337). Orderly Portuguese-ness, in other words, must be conveyed through conventional normative monolingual practices.

For the evoked “linguistas,” the use of *emigrês* thus implies a deficit of Portuguese-ness, a loss surrendered to the dominance of the host nation’s language which, in the global exchange of imperial languages, also exercises prestige value over the Portuguese language. The succumbing to a globally dominant language, however, brings different consequences *vis-à-vis* Portuguese-ness depending on geographical location and, relatedly, location within global modes of production.²

The work of another Luso-American writer, Ramiro Dutra, sheds more light on the relationship between *emigrês* and emigrant experiences of global capital. Like the hotel workers of rural origins in *O Cais das Merendas*, the experiences outlined in Dutra's poem, "Lactif6rnia," exist as instruments of wealth accumulation within global capital:

Meu amor trabalha duro,
Trabalha na leitaria,
Chega a casa derreado,
S6o tr6s ordenhas por dia.

[...]

Meu amor trabalha duro
Todos os dias do ano,
P'ra dar de mamar 6 Am6rica
Com este leite a6oriano. (Dutra 309)

The linguistic production contained in the poem emerges, therefore, from these experiences of labor and production, rather than from bourgeois consumption that informs metropolitan code-switching and the integration of loanwords into conventional Portuguese.

A Sandra faz "baby-sitting",
Cozinha que 6 um encanto,
E h6-de um dia coroar
No Senhor Esp6rito Santo.

[...]

A vaca 6 a nossa vida,
A nossa sustentac6o,
P6e a comida na mesa,
Paga os "bills" e o camic6o. (Dutra 310)

Lexical loans, such as that in the stanzas above, typically integrated into Portuguese phonological patterns, circulate within a Luso-American sphere of meanings where socioeconomic challenges coexist with, and in many ways inform, traditional ceremonies (such as Esp6rito Santo festivals) and how they are performed. Dutra's poem thus gives expression to a form of Portugueseness

on the margins of both the global nation and global capital; while also demonstrating how the latter informs the former.

As Brites's poem underscores, the social forces behind official Portuguese, and dominant notions of Portugueseness recognize this form of linguistic production as disorderly. In doing so, the same forces of exclusion that historically forced the emigration of many Portuguese, thus forming émigré communities, continue to play out in the so-called Portuguese global nation depending on one's place in global capital and production. As Robin Tolmach Lakoff explains, speakers enter discursive realms "with differing amounts of real-world power, authority, and status, and these are translated into differences in permissible linguistic behavior" (44). In other words, it is not the lexical borrowing that marginalizes the speaker, but rather the speaker's marginalized place in capital that impacts how their linguistic production is valued and interpreted in the global nation.

Indexicality and Symbolic Exchanges

The *luso-* subject is signified through the post-Estado Novo metropolis's construction of the global nation and interpellated via intersecting institutions, such as schools, family, and media. Although the use of Portuguese language is not the singular medium of participation in the global collectivity, orderly/bourgeois-derived linguistic production is nonetheless a nationalist measure of adequate Portugueseness and a criterion for accessing the signifying process of the Portuguese global national narrative. The same is true for residents of both the metropolis and of communities abroad. As Emanuel da Silva explains, discourses surrounding global Portuguese nationalism tend to "gloss over internal divisions based on unequal capital (be it linguistic, regional, cultural, economic, gendered, or generational)" (190). Although strategically neglected at the level of official discourse, these divisions, as the literary texts above illustrate, consistently emerge and inform subjectivity within the Portuguese global nation.

The linguistic production of the *luso-* subject resides within a larger field of global Portuguese language and, relatedly, global late capitalism. A linguistic variety, such as the *emigrês*, or a style like bourgeois speech, exists within the constellation of meanings of local and global matrices of power. As Dermeval da Hora notes, moreover, "avaliar a variação associada ao estilo implica avaliar a identidade do usuário" (20). Eckert delves further into the relationship between identity, style, and ideology by positing ideology "at the center of stylistic practice:

one way or another, every stylistic move is the result of an interpretation of the social world and of the meanings of elements within it, as well as a positioning of the stylizer with respect to that world” (456). Using Bourdieu’s theoretical terminology, different styles or varieties exist within a linguistic market—in this case that of Portuguese. This market is, furthermore, always in contact with other linguistic markets and is part of the circulation of languages within global matrices of power, such as that of, and leading to, late capitalism. We can, therefore, talk about a global linguistic market within late modernity in which different languages circulate carrying different exchange value in a cultural economy framed by centuries of empire. Within the global linguistic market, and the language-specific markets (as well as different local markets) contained therein, one finds “an economy of symbolic exchanges” (Bourdieu 37) where power, privilege, and subalternity are performed, recognized, and policed.

Concisely put, the indexical field is the series of connotations (tied to socio-economics, race, sexuality, gender, (dis)ability) attributed to different variants—phonetic, lexical, prosodic, orthographic, and syntactic. As Eckert phrases it, the indexical field “is an embodiment of ideology in linguistic form” (464). The terminology of “indexicality” became an integral part of sociolinguistic theoretical parlance through Michael Silverstein (2003) and Eckert’s work over the last two decades. The terms *index* and *indexical* were introduced to semiotics far earlier by Charles Sanders Peirce who referred to “indexical signs” (IV 359).³ The indexical sign shares a connection to the object “as a matter of fact and by also forcibly intruding upon the mind” (IV 359). Peirce uses the weathervane as a metaphor for the indexical sign—one that points toward an entity (physical or otherwise) beyond it.

The study of indexicality examines how a subject’s linguistic practice is ensnared into the field of social meaning where power and subalternity are discursively constructed and rendered legible. In this sense, linguistic production becomes a form of identity performance in which what we say, and how we say it, makes us legible to the aforementioned field of meaning and other interlocutors contained therein. These connotations, socially attached to variables, are never permanently fixed, however. As the bourgeois lexical borrowing in Lídia Jorge’s novel illustrates, these connotations emerge through and reproduce existing power relations between speakers. This is where Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital is particularly helpful: subject-positions carrying significant cultural capital by way of their place in global and local matrices of power

appropriate and integrate variants (foreign-language words, in this case) into their identitarian performance.

Greater power in the economy of capital and production correlates to greater power in the economy of symbolic exchanges in which privileged subjects can accumulate and resignify variables, imbuing them with what is called “prestige”—a term used in sociolinguistics, most famously by William Labov’s studies in linguistic variation and social stratification in New York City (1966, 1972) to designate variants that tend to index markers of high social capital, such as education, wealth, and residence in affluent areas. This is, moreover, what Bourdieu would call a symbolic act of power. Jorge’s novel thus traces for us the birth of a particular Portuguese prestige variant, emerging through a subject-position carrying sufficient cultural capital to transform a non-standard linguistic variant into one of prestige, and ultimately into conventional standard language, the case of *hotel* being just one example.

The subject-position voicing *emigrês*, on the other hand, exists in a place within capital and its field of meaning that is largely divergent from Jorge’s bourgeois subject. This discrepancy ultimately underscores the notion that the speaker shapes and reproduces the indexical field through the linguistic signs that are voiced, written, or signed. This also speaks to the complexity of the relationship between the identity of the speaker and the field of social meaning in which indexicality, power, and prestige circulate. Notably, the same word, or lexical loan, carries different meanings and indexical value depending on the speaker’s identitarian value in the global/imperial/capitalist economy of bodies. An example mentioned earlier illustrates precisely this: while the word *shopping* has become part of standard (global) Portuguese, the term *mall* remains stigmatized and labeled as illegitimate linguistic production, the opposite of a prestige variant.

Rather than defiantly using such lexical loans, as proposed by Brites, the luso- subject is taught to read the indexical field in accordance with the hierarchy of values attributed to each style—intersecting with social hierarchies—by the forces of social domination that posit particular styles in conjunction with power. Through institutional and corporate media forces, the luso- subject is guided away from the lexical borrowing of *emigrês* and toward standard Portuguese found in the Portuguese school classroom in the host country (usually funded and staffed by the institutions mentioned earlier) and in metropolitan mainstream media. In following the broadly disseminated style—the

normative/standard—the luso- subject is more symbolically integrated into the constructed center of the global nation.

Moreover, for the bourgeois characters in *O Cais das Merendas*, inaugurating and utilizing a new variable does not “simply reflect or reassert their particular pre-ordained place on the social map” (Eckert 464). Rather, it implies an “ideological move” (Eckert 464) that adds to the semiotic repertoire of bourgeois identity performance. The linguistic sign, such as that used through bourgeois loans, is added to the world of signs as the subject performs the ideological maneuver of identity. This performance and introduction of a sign carries more value because of the speaker’s initial transformation into a sign. As Eckert further elaborates, “the use of a variable is not simply an invocation of a pre-existing indexical value but an indexical claim which may either invoke a pre-existing value or stake a claim to a new value” (464). It is in this regard that the indexical field is always shifting, the dynamic nature of a language’s lexicon being merely one example. Similarly, *emigrês* also stakes a claim to a new value by defiantly (in relation to metropolitan standard language) building upon an indexical field corresponding to Portuguese emigrant linguistic markets. Within the larger linguistic markets of the global nation and *Lusofonia*, however, these ideological moves diverge in value according to the speaker’s place in the existing matrix of power.

Through socioeconomic stratification (and its intersections with other modes of exclusion) access to indexical value is also stratified with unequal participation in the economy of symbolic exchanges. This is, of course, evidenced in the linguistic production found within spheres of power—political, cultural, business, and financial—in which lexical loans have become part of everyday mainstream vocabulary. The instances of borrowing seen in *O Cais das Merendas*, as well as others in mainstream metropolitan media and popular culture index not only cultural capital by accessing foreign vocabulary, but also full participation in late modernity’s modes of production (including cultural) and consumption. As such, they subsequently also index access to shaping dominant culture through such modes.

Bourgeois lexical borrowing, therefore, not only contributes to a collection of signs through which dominant identities can be performed, but also becomes integrated into dominant culture, as evidenced by the loans often found in news media, television programs, and other media. These are, of course, vehicles of staging normativity—be it linguistic, gender, ethnic, racial, or corporal, while simultaneously obscuring discursive processes of othering along these lines.

Furthermore, the perpetual elaboration of dominant culture—in this case, normative Portuguese-ness—also contributes to the field of meaning in which power is embedded, reproduced, and misrecognized. Regarding dominant culture and misrecognition, Bourdieu lays out the connection between these and language:

ideologies serve particular interests which they tend to present as universal interests, shared by the group as a whole. The dominant culture contributes to the real integration of the dominant class (by facilitating the communication between all its members and by distinguishing them from other classes); it also contributes to the fictitious integration of society as a whole, and thus to the apathy (false consciousness) of the dominated classes; and finally, it contributes to the legitimation of the established order by establishing distinctions (hierarchies) and legitimating these distinctions. The dominant culture produces this ideological effect by concealing the function of division beneath the function of communication: the culture which unifies (the medium of communication) is also the culture which separates (the instrument of distinction) and which legitimates distinctions by forcing all other cultures (designated as subcultures) to define themselves by their distance from the dominant culture. (167)

Bourdieu's last sentence certainly applies to many subaltern experiences born of western expansion and imperial endeavor. It is also observable in José Brites's deployment of *emigrês*—defining Portuguese emigrant, and Portuguese-speaking linguistic production, by its distance to the linguistic production proposed and enforced by “os linguistas.” Through this distance between marginal and dominant culture/speech the discrepancy in indexical and prestige value is reproduced, and so are dominant notions of valid Portuguese expression and identity that impact both Portuguese emigrant communities and under-privileged metropolitan citizens.

Disparate Capital, Disparate Subjectivities

As noted above, the value of a variant such as a lexical loan is contingent upon the speaker's value within the realm of signs composing the semiotic existence of the Portuguese global nation, which is in turn inextricable from the larger semiotic existence of global power relations. The speaker, or subject, is, in other words, also a sign composed of meaning attributed to labor, race, geographic location, gender, ethnicity, age, sexuality, and (dis)ability.

As a participant in the field of meaning, the subject exists and is interpreted through the circulation of signs that compose said field—what Jacques Lacan calls the symbolic realm—or “the universe of symbols” (*Seminar II*, 29). Notably, Voloshinov refers to this realm as “the world of signs” (10); and “without signs there is no ideology” (9). As power relations can only exist ideologically—through meaning given to power, and power given to meaning—there is a vested interest in reproducing the symbolic realm. The symbolic is also the place of language and subjectivity in which the subject exists as sign among other signs, linguistic, corporal, or otherwise. With regard to this particular relationship, Lacan claims that “the system of egos [is] entirely comprehended within [language]” (*Seminar II*, 278). Emile Benveniste comes to a similar conclusion when arguing that “it is in and through language that man constitutes himself as a *subject*, because language alone establishes the concept of ‘ego’ in reality” (224) [author’s emphasis]. Moreover, Peirce, in a vein similar to Lacan’s, argued decades earlier that “the word or sign which man uses is man himself [...] Thus my language is the sum total of myself” (V 189).

To exist as a subject in the symbolic realm, the process of identity is crafted and articulated through the semiotic fabric of this realm even before birth through social forces such as family, school, and other institutions. For the *luso*-subject as a body/sign this occurs, in addition to language, by way of symbols indexing their own Portuguese-ness including home decorations (such as the *galo de Barcelos*), soccer club affiliation, cuisine, quotidian interpersonal practices (i.e., membership in Portuguese social clubs), and participation in different rituals (as in the case of Portuguese-language Catholic mass or annual Portuguese diaspora festivals). State initiatives thus operate in tandem with different markets of goods and artifacts arising from diaspora, driven in either private or public sectors. These sorts of semiotic phenomena constitute the endless economy of signs into which the *luso*-subject is placed. These are, in other words, examples of the repeated moments in which the subject is confronted by the sign which it is to occupy in the symbolic/world of signs. As Voloshinov elaborates, “consciousness becomes consciousness only once it has been filled with ideological (semiotic) content, consequently only in the process of social interaction” (11). The body turned into a sign (i.e., the *luso*-subject), through signs, then circulates within the world of signs—becoming another link in the signifying chain of power. State and private initiatives look to guarantee that the *luso*-subject is legible as such to the authoritative gazes of orderly Portuguese-ness.

Value and Connotation in the Translingual Sign

Voloshinov's theorization of ideology as a constellation of signs effectively takes into account the relationship between power and language, and especially the role of the subject within the world of signs. For him, the nature of the sign is not fully understood without considering its ideological functions—the complex components comprising the word as a “social sign” (14). This invites us to consider the politics of lexical loans as “translingual signs” in order to account for the use and/or conventional integration of a linguistic sign from one language into another. This process of integration implies issues of indexical value and connotation that have been discussed in this essay. The conventionality of these loans suggests a borrowing not only at the level of individual speakers, but at the supra-level of an entire official language, the limits of which are elaborated and policed by agents of dominant culture. Subsequently, the integration of the sign makes its use in speech a marker of modern (that is, post-Estado Novo) Portuguese-ness.

The term “translingual” has been widely used in the realm of translation studies in contexts of shifting meanings, namely signifieds, from one language to another, especially in reference to a subject's experiences across different languages. The translingual sign at work in contemporary standard Portuguese entails far more than the evoked signified, summoning meanings that circulate beyond the sign. At the same time, thinking of lexical loans as linguistic signs sets up a theoretical trajectory through which to interrogate the semiotic, and therefore political, complexities that involve translingual integration. Distinguishing the conventional/orderly loanword *shopping* from the disorderly nonce loan *mall* thus serves to designate the inequity between the two; the former being a marker of privilege and born of the accumulation of capital, whereas the latter is denied legitimacy in the global nation. Understanding the emergence of the translingual sign demands an awareness of the workings of meanings that exist beyond it, but that are also central to its construction.

Regarding meanings that exist beyond the sign, and evoked by it, Roland Barthes notably works with a signification model that accounts for different relationships between signifier, signified, and the larger realm of meaning. Drawing on the work and model proposed by Louis Hjelmslev, Barthes is concerned mainly with the relationship between denotation and connotation of the sign. In challenging the authenticity of denotation, Barthes dismantles the fantasy of the totality and containment of meaning within the sign. This fantasy

thus establishes a hierarchy positing denotation over connotation: “there is no reason to make this system the privileged one, to make it the locus and the norm of a primary, original meaning” (6).

The conventionality of *shopping over mall* offers an example of connotation impacting the emergence (or rather, selection) of a signifier and denoted referent. The connotation or indexical value of the signifier determines its reference to the signified in the language into which it is integrated. The appropriation of bourgeois foreign terms in *O Cais das Merendas* suggests that connotation, in a way, precedes denotation in its integration into Portuguese. The connotation of *hotel*, for instance, in being perceived as tied to a foreign bourgeois subject carrying significant cultural capital, is understood first through the subject speaking it. *Hotel* is a signifier that is chosen, because of its cultural capital, to denote the same as *estalagem*. In the cultural politics of lexical borrowing in Jorge’s novel, connotation (namely bourgeois late capitalist consumption) is the criterion through which a signifier is appropriated and ultimately integrated into standard Portuguese. Voloshinov comes to a similar conclusion when refuting the “strict division between referential denotation and evaluative connotation” (105), arguing that such a division fails:

to note the more profound functions of evaluation in speech. Referential meaning is molded by evaluation; it is evaluation, after all, which determines that particular referential meaning may enter the purview of speakers — both the immediate purview and the broader social purview of the particular social group. (105)

Value, in other words, is not extrinsic to the sign, whether it is the linguistic sign or the sign pertaining to a socially constructed body. Value, as a form of signification, emerges through historicized relations of power, global and local. It is thus the higher value placed on bourgeois foreign speakers over the existent marginality of working-class Portuguese emigrants that informs the higher indexical value attributed to bourgeois lexical loans in relation to the loans deemed “disordered” used by the emigrant luso- subject.

Conclusion

As often overlapping discursive projects, *Lusofonia* and the Portuguese global nation are constructed collectivities, within which emigrant identities with connections to Portugal or its former colonies are subsumed. Through the critical

frameworks of indexicality, we can interrogate the imbalances and social disparities in power that the discursive project strategically glosses over. Such disparities are once again obfuscated under mainstream depoliticized and dehistoricized narratives of nation and language. In the realm of speech, the everyday performance of metropolitan linguistic centrality through particular lexical borrowing (among other linguistic phenomena) simultaneously inscribes the border between disorderly and normative speech between that which is permitted to metropolitan Portuguese speakers and that which must be policed by authorities of orderly Portugueseness.

It is in the semiotics of social life that disciplines may converge and offer nuanced understandings of Portugal's project of global nationality and *Lusofonia* as discursive projects that inevitably interact with the larger world of signs in which global and local forms of power are embedded. A complex critique of the imperial-esque expansion of the Portuguese language demands an examination of how those that speak the language are socially and culturally situated within it, and which forces do the situating. How do the criteria for "adequate" Portugueseness or sufficient Lusophony intersect with larger modes of exclusion? In interrogating value within linguistic production and exchanges across the Lusophone World, we arrive at larger questions of power, and the reasons for which *Lusofonia* and the Portuguese global nation continue to be so problematic.

NOTES

1. While several volumes have been published on *Lusofonia*, the volumes themselves, or the essays contained therein, have tended to be disciplinarily segregated between linguistics and cultural studies. For instance, *Lusofonia and Its Futures* (*Portuguese Literary & Cultural Studies* 25) contains only one essay by a scholar who identifies as a linguist, meanwhile all contributors to *Global Portuguese: Linguistic Ideologies in Late Modernity* situate themselves disciplinarily within linguistics.

2. Code-switching and lexical borrowing in other Portuguese-speaking immigrant communities has been well-documented such as in Brazilian (Araújo) (Bensabat-Ott) (Castellarin) and Cape Verdean (Carvalho) communities in the United States.

3. While Peirce uses the term *interpretant* as synonymous with referent, similar to Saussure's *signified*, Peirce's term leaves room for discord between sender and recipient. For Peirce, the sign is "something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the *interpretant* of the first sign (II 135) [author's emphasis].

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