

LANGUAGES IN CONTACT: EUROPEAN PORTUGUESE MEETS AUSTRIAN GERMAN

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Abstract: Migrant communities are the perfect stage to observe languages in contact. Austria has a small and recent Portuguese community and this fact allowed us to analyze the behavior of European Portuguese in a German speaking context. Interferences are likely to happen, but are the speakers aware of these? Do they really command their languages separately? What are the strategies they refer to? These and other answers can be found with the present investigation.

Keywords: Emigration. Languages in contact. Interferences.

■ **M**igration is a part of the past of Portugal, but recently it has become again a component of its present. After the end of *Estado Novo*, many wanted to believe that the migration years for the Portuguese were over, and the admission to the European Community in 1986 would lead Portugal to a central position, substituting its peripheral geography. Incoming migrants looking for a better life in Portugal in the 90's were the cherry on the top. It was the interest in the new migrant communities in Portugal that drew the interest to the migration phenomenon, but the surprise was not that Portugal was being chosen as a target country, but that after the turn to the 21st century the numbers of Portuguese leaving the country for migration purposes were as high as in the 60's. Portuguese migration has neither ended nor stopped as it was popularly claimed. The economic crisis in 2008 just made matters worse: the waves of migration increased. Apart from the traditional targets of the Portuguese migration, such as Brazil, United States, France and Germany, there were many other countries, especially in Europe, which were new land for the Portuguese to set foot on. One of these cases was the Austrian one.

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Unlike Germany, Austria was never a focus for Portuguese emigration, but in the later years, a few dozens of Portuguese turned out into a community of more than 2.000 members. It is clear that it is still a very small number comparing to other migrant communities in Austria or to other Portuguese communities abroad. Still, it was perfect to analyze the development of a mother language in a foreign context and specially to check how the mother language is affected by the dominant languages of the Austrian society. This investigation tried to describe the language behavior of the Portuguese living in Austria. Assuming that the mother language is in a stable state, there is still room for influences to take place. The results of those possible influences were object of this study.

MIGRATIONS

It is impossible to refer to the Portuguese History of the past centuries without referring to streams of migration leaving the country. Portugal faced regularly different sorts of social, economic and/or political problems and, for many, emigration was the only way out. Baganha, Góis and Pereira (2005, p. 418) divided these streams into three cycles of migration, as it is visible in Table 1.

The first cycle started in the middle of the 19th century and lasted until 1960. This is the so-called transatlantic cycle, as North and South Americas were the main targets. By these days “emigration” and “Brazil” were practically synonyms, since the great majority of the outgoing Portuguese aimed at Brazil. Until a couple years before, it has been part of the Kingdom of Portugal, and even the King and his royal court moved to Rio de Janeiro. Apart from the language, the administrative structures were very alike to those found in Portugal. Besides that, the abolishment of slavery work by the end of the 19th century forced Brazil to find other sources of labor. The second cycle shows a complete turn in the target of the Portuguese emigration. Transatlantic emigration was substituted by intra-European emigration between 1950 and 1974. The post-war situation demanded the reconstruction of the heart of Europe. France and Germany found in Portugal sources of workforce, who left behind a miserable country, fleeing not only from participating in the Colonial War but also from a dictatorship. In 1974, the revolution that brought back democracy to Portugal and the hope of a better country, refrained the streams of migration. The third and last cycle that the authors indicate begins in 1985 and should last until the present. This stream carried on the trend set by the previous one, where European countries were preferred to others. In this case, Germany and Switzerland were the main targets of the Portuguese. The present pointed out by the referred authors was 2005, but since 2005 until these days, ten years have passed and there were, again, major changes taking place in Portugal, which reflected in the growing numbers of Portuguese leaving the country. Having this in mind, we consulted updated statistical data (in *Observatório de Emigração*) and other investigations (such as PEREIRA, 2010) and decided to complete the original table with a closing date for the third cycle of migration and adding a later cycle, the fourth, which would start in 2008 and would last until today. Both last cycles focus particularly European emigration, as it was already visible in the previous cycles.

Table 1 – Portuguese emigration

	When?	Where to?
1 st cycle	Mid 19 th cent. – 1960	Esp. Brazil
2 nd cycle	1950 – 1974	Esp. France and Germany
3 rd cycle	1985 – “Present”	Esp. Germany and Switzerland

Source: Baganha, Góis e Pereira (2005).

Table 2 – Amendment of the author to the original table

	When?	Where to?
3 rd cycle	1985 – 2008	Esp. Europe
4 th cycle	2008 – ...	Esp. Europe

Source: Elaborated by the author.

The Portuguese described in this article belong to the third cycle. As mentioned before, the community is still small and shows that Austria has never been a traditional target for the Portuguese emigration, which is rather a puzzling fact, considering that not only do all other German speaking countries have a remarkable Portuguese community, but also as there were some connections between Austria and Portugal at least since the 15th century in terms of royal and political relationships. Today, there are 2.775 Portuguese (OBSERVATÓRIO DA EMIGRAÇÃO, 2014) which shows how fast the community is growing if we consider that in 2010, when the interviews took place, the total was 1.553 members. This outstanding increase evidences that the migration wave from Portugal is still powerful, and that new target-countries are being aimed at in migration terms.

Comparing the Portuguese communities in four German speaking countries, it is visible at Table 3 the difference between the community in Austria and the remaining ones. In Switzerland and Luxembourg, the weight of the Portuguese community is notorious in the demography of the respective countries. In Switzerland, the Portuguese are 3% of the resident population and 13% of the immigrants in the country. In Luxembourg, the numbers are even higher: 17% of the population is Portuguese out of 36% of the local immigrants. In Germany, the statistic for the Portuguese is not so impressive, due to the great number of the German population and to the other more representative migrant communities. In Austria, although the migrant population is slightly higher (13%) than the European average, the number of Portuguese is practically insignificant. 0,2% of the immigrants living in Austria are Portuguese, who consist of 0,03% of the total population.

Table 3 – Portuguese communities in German speaking countries

Country	People with Portuguese citizenship	% of Portuguese among the total population	% of emigrants (every country)	% of Portuguese among the total of emigrants
Switzerland	253.227 (2013)	3%	24%	13%
Germany	127.368 (2013)	– (0,15%)*	9%	2%
Luxembourg	90.800 (2014)	17%	45%	36%
Austria	2.775 (2014)	– (0,03%)*	13%	– (0,2%)*

Source: Observatório da Emigração (2014), except (*) which were our calculations.

It is not by chance that Austria was not a magnet for emigration, particularly to Portuguese emigration. Austria always had very protective legislation concerning the rights of its national labor force, but after the Second World War, things were about to change. Labor emigration was then welcome under the scope of some bilateral agreements to face the lack of Austrian working force. The Raab-Olah Treaty (1961) was clear stating that foreign workers could only take vacancies that could not be filled up by nationals. Besides that, the rotation principle was also applied, meaning that the foreign labor workers were hired for a specific period of time, being replaced by others when this period was over. This aspect was the possible warranty that the migration was temporary and that the workers wouldn't settle down in Austria. For some reason, they were called *Gastarbeiter* – guest workers. In 1962, a treaty with Spain was signed, so that Austria could recruit the so-called *Gastarbeiter* in Spain. The obvious failure of this choice made the Austrian government changes the geography of its working sources: there were treaties signed in that same decade with Turkey (1964) and with the former Yugoslavia (1966), which turned out to be a great success. In the 90's, Austria was once again the target of a wide wave of migration due to the political events, which took place just after its borders. The Fall of the Iron Curtain (1991) and the Balkan War (1991-1995) made a lot of people seek refuge in Austria, making the number of emigrants climb greatly. In this same decade, Austria joined the European Union (1995), enabling European citizens to have the same rights as Austrians concerning housing and working. In half a century (1961-2014) migrant population (or with migrant background) grew from 1% to 13% in Austria.

Where were the Portuguese during these two periods when Austria received most of its emigrants, the decades of 1960 and 1990? In the 60's (until early 70's), there were the major waves of Portuguese emigration, but by then, they would aim particularly at France and Germany. In the 90's, Portugal was enjoying the results and profiting from the UE-membership with a positive conjuncture, and it was believed by then that the Portuguese emigration just belonged to the past.

LANGUAGES IN CONTACT

Communities with migrants are the ideal place to observe phenomena related to language in contact, as the existing languages in the community compete among themselves. Assuming there are only two languages at stake, although the existence of more parallel languages is likely to happen, the use of the languages is determined by the situation and by the speakers involved. The mother tongue of the community is likely to be used in internal circles, which means in the family and with friends. The official language of the society – the other competitor – is used externally: with members of the society, who don't belong to this specific community, for working purposes, and in any situation with official entities. Although the fields of use of the languages can be well defined within the internal and external circles, in the head of the speaker they both live in the same space, which can lead to the influence of one language on the other or the other way around. This sort of interference depends on several factors, such as knowledge/lack of knowledge of the languages, circumstances when they are used, speaking partners, intensity of the contact, etc. In the languages, there are also several layers where the influence can be observed. The more intense the contact is, more likely it is that there will be visible influences on one or both languages. But the influences occur step by step. According to Riehl (2001, p. 35), the impact of the influence of the other language can be found in the following linguistic areas (in this order): lexicon, phonology/prosody, morphology and syntax, when facing a growing level of contact.

But what does the speaker really do when dealing with the language battle that is constantly taking place in his head? Separation of both languages is the most common, not allowing that one influences the other, but when this situation is not possible then code-switching, loans and calques are likely to take place. Following the definition of Poplack (1980, p. 583), code-switching consists of a “switch between two languages within an utterance, a sentence or a phrase”. The competent speaker can use this strategy to better manage his languages, but this strategy can be rather helpful to a not so competent speaker, since the other language can support the lack of knowledge of the other one (WEINREICH, 1953). Loan is the inclusion of a foreign word or expression in an utterance of the spoken language, but the foreign word or expression is not adjusted in phonological nor in morphological terms (GROSJEAN, 1982, p. 308). Calque consists of a very specific sort of loan (OTHEGUY; GARCIA; FERNÁNDEZ, 1989, p. 44), where the meaning of a word is transferred to the other language, without its original form, whereas a loan conveys meaning and form in the other language.

The migration context can provide the situation where the speaker faces and has to deal with and live in a different language, but it also opens the doors to new realities and experiences that the speaker wouldn't have. So this new context not only detaches the speaker from his original speaking community, resulting in a detachment from the language (in more dramatic cases it can even lead to language attrition) but the speaker also enriches his speaking competence and enlarges his vocabulary with the new language. Mayone Dias (1989, p. 62) states this precise ambivalence of the migration experience.

In linguistic terms, the migration experience represents both an expansion and contraction of the vocabulary. On the one hand, the speaker acquires new lexica to match the new living needs, but on the other, he starts losing the whole lot of words referring to activities and habits he is more and more detached from.

THE PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE OF THE PORTUGUESE IN AUSTRIA

The selection of the Portuguese sample in Austria that was subject to the interview was made through the following criteria: 1. to have European Portuguese as a stabilized mother language, meaning that they should have learned Portuguese during their schooling process; 2. to have at least an intermediate knowledge of German, making use of this language in a daily basis; 3. to live in Austria at least for two years. The choice of these three criteria can be justified by some arguments. It was important that the sample would speak the same variety of Portuguese, which is why other Portuguese speakers from other origins apart from Portugal were put aside. For instance, Brazilian Portuguese has orally some syntactical structures which are not used in standard European Portuguese, and this could mislead the investigation: is it a foreign language influence or simply another variety of Portuguese? The decision to have as a criterion the knowledge of the German language was provided by the fact that it is the national and dominant language in Austria. Nevertheless, the subjects were also asked about the knowledge in other foreign languages and some of them were visible in the results of the investigation. The length of the stay in Austria was set to two years for two reasons: to make sure it handled of permanent migrants (and not temporary). The European Union considers permanent migration when you live and work more than one year in a foreign country. We found that a second year would be suitable to enable the person to have “enough” time to learn the language till an intermediate level.

The sample that resulted from this selection was 33 interviews, with an average length of 29 minutes and 39 seconds, making in total 15 hours, 48 minutes and 41 seconds of audio material. The interviews were audio-recorded and the interviewees knew it. This fact might have slightly influenced the original goal of recording “spontaneous acts of speak”, since by some interviews, we realized that as soon as the STOP button was pushed, the person adopted a less formal and more relaxed language. Anyway, this was more the exception than the rule.

In general, the average profile of this sample is a young female adult, coming from an urban center, who completed an university degree, was working in Portugal before moving to Austria, and carried on working there. They justified the emigration to Austria for personal (and not professional) reasons. The emigration occurred after 2000, but before the crisis of 2008, making them belong to the 3rd cycle of migration, previously described.

Along the interview, one of the questions asked consisted of a self-evaluation or a self-reflection about the speaker’s competences, capacity and/or ability to speak Portuguese. Most of them recognized that their language competence had been better, but for them this was explainable due to the lack of contact to the language, its exercise and the communication in formal contexts. The formality of the language was referred by many to be a growing obstacle, especially in terms of a more adequate vocabulary to certain situations. Others claimed to miss a more “modern” type of language. Both justified these facts because of only talking in Portuguese in familiar contexts about daily routines, where more specific, sophisticated or up-to-dated structures or vocabulary were not required. Some even confessed that they had difficulty with some orthographic matters that has never been the case before. In the end,

many referred to make an explicit effort to find adequate Portuguese words, having German as a starting point.

After the interviews were transcribed, a corpus was elaborated with all the tokens, which showed a deviant behavior compared to the standard European Portuguese. This process resulted into a corpus of almost 600 tokens, which were classified according to the Brauer-Figueiredo (1999) model that distinguished the following areas: phonological, syntactical, morph-syntactical, pragmatic-textual and semantic-lexical. In the following pages, we'll display and analyze some examples of each area. The number associated to each token refers the code of each interviewee.

The phonological area was the less affected one with not even a dozen of tokens. Here are two examples:

1. (7) quando telefono para o Magistrat para saber alguma informação ou aquele **bezirque** < Bezirksamt

The German word *Bezirk* (district) is said as it would be a Portuguese word, acquiring Portuguese phonological patterns, which it obviously doesn't have: [bə'zirkə], but then the speaker probably notices the mismatch of sound and word and corrects it to the proper German pronunciation [bətʰsɪʁk].

2. (10) Os portugueses falam muito na estra < na rua é mesmo muito normal

This is a very interesting insight of way of thinking of the speaker. Although the conversation is being held in Portuguese, German words seem to be much more available, in a ready-to-use state, even if it is not the language in question. The word *Straße* (street) proves it. The ready-to-be-said word was *estrada*, which is a possibility that Portuguese offers and that is much closer in a formal aspect to the German option, but which is not the most adequate word to the context.

The syntactical area was object of some influences. It is important to mention that the German syntax follows the SOV pattern whereas the Portuguese consists of a SVO language.

3. (1) e consegue com o ordenado viver

The separation of modal and main verb is rather common in German. The modal verb takes position 2 in the sentence and the main verb takes the final position, being its objects in the middle of those two verb parts. This structure is mimed in Portuguese resulting in this awkward situation where the prepositional object comes first than the verb it is dependent of.

4. (19) e pronto malas de cartão não existem já

Not only verbs but also adverbs assume the expected German position. Even if adverbs fall into a rather movable category in Portuguese, some of them have a fixed place in the sentence: *já* should take a pre-verbal position (*já não existem*), whereas the German form goes pos-verbal (...*existieren nicht mehr*)

Brauer-Figueiredo (1999) suggested the morpho-syntactical area as one of the categories, but since there was also an exclusive syntactical area, we decided to keep the proposed terminology, although we concentrated in this section the influence in terms of morphology. This was a rather thrilling category as it seems like a puzzle to match roots from one language with affixes from another one, but we'll see that the interviewees managed to be quite creative.

5. (2) tem mais 3 ou mais **Dialekts**

Dialekt [dialekt] is the German equivalent to the Portuguese *dialecto* [die'letu]. The fact that the <a> being lower and that the <k> being uttered makes it a German sequence and not a Portuguese one, but then comes a surprising Portuguese affix for the plural form: -s. The -s is practically omnipresent in the formation of Portuguese plural forms, but it is just one under many other options for plural in German. In this specific case, the predictable plural form would have been with the suffix -e, *Dialekte*, which doesn't sound like a plural for a Portuguese speaker, who needs the closing -s to feel the plurality of the word.

6. (22) são ileais são de uma ilealidade extrema

The Portuguese word *leal* is most likely not of everyday use to speaker 22, as she rushed to build a negative form and its noun, following a pattern of a most current word *real*. Check the probable derivation process unconsciously used: *real* > *irreal*; *real* > *realidade*; *legal* > *ilegal*; *ilegal* > *ilegalidade*. Following this pattern, the negative prefix couldn't be other than i-, so *leal* > **ileal* and then **ileal* > **ilealdade*, not being aware that for this specific case the adequate negative prefix would be des- and the noun formation is irregular (*deslealdade*) not requiring the connector vowel i.

7. (13) um sistema mais **conservativo** ou normal

Despite coming from different language's families, Portuguese and German share some identical words, at least at a formal look, as semantically and pragmatically their use is other, the called "false friends". *Konservativ* is one of these cases, it requires the gender suffix -o to be turned into the Portuguese *conservativo*. Nevertheless, this existing Portuguese word is used as "preservative", as the language has another suffix available for the sense of "conservative" and that is *conservador*.

The remaining categories (pragmatic-textual and semantic-lexical) were by far the most popular among the deviation examples of this corpus, having each one alone more than hundreds of examples. It cannot be a surprise that categories, which approach praxis and meaning would be the most affected ones, but having so many cases into these two categories, whose borders are not so tight, made them decide to seek another filter, which would help us distinguish the different phenomena that were reported. Before heading to the new filter, here are some examples of the deviations in both categories:

8. (8) Já que estou aqui tenho de fazer alguma coisa\ ou?

A Portuguese speaking person who listens to this sentence would expect an alternative introduced by the disjunctive conjunction *ou* (or). In this case there is no alternative to be presented as this use of the disjunctive conjunction follows the German strategy of formulating a question-tag, which is with a questioning *oder* (or) at the end of the sentence. In Portuguese for this purpose the expected tag would be *não é?* or *pois não?*

9. (15) depois vivia numa WG

Example 9 shows the perfect integration of a German common abbreviation within the Portuguese sentence. It can be seen as a word by word swap, but for a Portuguese speaker who doesn't know German, it is not understandable. *WG* makes *Wohngemeinschaft* (shared apartment) short, and it cannot really be considered a word by word swap, since this concept doesn't really exist or at least is not so spread in Portugal as it is in Austria. So the speaker decides to make use of an economic and practical word, instead of recurring to some sort of explanation in Portuguese, which would be at least longer and less efficient.

10. (1) Foi uma arte de discriminação

Out of the context this is a perfect Portuguese sentence. Nevertheless, if it is brought to the speaker's speech, we can find a very interesting deviation case. What was said was "It was an artistic discrimination" whereas what was meant was "It was a sort of a discrimination". The issue here is the word *arte*, which in Portuguese means "art" the noun, but in German consists of a modal adverb *Art*, that is "sort of, type of, etc".

11. (21) as cebolas ao fim de 3 semanas em casa estão grelados estão estragados uma coisa que eu nunca tinha experimentado

In this last example, we can observe the transfer of the meaning from the German *Erfahrung* to its direct Portuguese equivalent *experiência, vivência*. The speaker used the verb *erfahren* with its German meaning though its Portuguese version, resulting in something else other than what wanted to be said. The Portuguese *experimentado* transmits the idea that speaker tasted or even ate the onions mentioned; whereas she just wanted to say that it was something she has never seen before.

As it was already announced before, the need for a second filter showed to be imperative so that the classification of the occurrences would be more efficient. For this reason, we applied the proposals of Otheguy, Garcia and Fernández (1989) and Otheguy and Garcia (1993): switch, loan and calque. Briefly explained, switch consists of a word by word swap; loan is when a foreign word is integrated in an utterance of a different language, with its original form and meaning; and calque is a very special form of loan, but in this case the meaning of a foreign word is transferred without its original (foreign) form, that is to say, a

word is used in the spoken language but its meaning is other than the normal used one. Let's have a look at some examples.

Switch

12. (5) O senhor embaixador disse que einleiten umas palavras

This was the only deviant case where a verb was put at stake. The German verb *einleiten* (introduce) comes in the adequate Portuguese position, but it is in an infinitive form instead of the conditional one required. This can be explained as the conditional form in German can be formed by a modal verb in the infinitive form plus the infinitive of the main verb. If this were the case, then the modal verb in the conditional form would close the sentence, as it is a subordinate clause.

13. (1) Basta ter uma coisa parecida com o Matura e pronto

Swapping of words is a frequent strategy particularly when the introduced foreign word has a special cultural content, which is lost by its translation. *Matura* is the final secondary school exam Austrian pupils have to pass to finish their school education. In Portugal, not only the exam doesn't have a special name (*exame do 12º ano*) but it is not celebrated at it is in Austria. For many Portuguese, the final exams to finish the secondary school act as the access to the university system.

Loan

This was by far the most used strategy in the corpus. 2/3 of the interviewees recurred to this option introducing mainly German words, but also words from other languages: German *Studium* for *O meu estudo*; english "facilities" for *Muitas facilidades* and the Italian *andare* for *Estamos a andar para Itália*.

14. (18) o plástico é plástico tudo os cartões de sumo também têm aquela caixinhas especiais

The German word *Karton* is converted into the Portuguese *cartões*. The form is very similar that is why it puzzles the speaker, who has this word more accessible than the one expectable: *pacote*.

15. (17) enquanto estudava e discutia muito com amigos da universidade

The so called "latin verbs" in German are German words which have a Latin root, so it is very likely that Portuguese also has some similar forms, but the tricky part is that they are not 1:1 considering their meanings and that is what can be found in this example. *Studieren* and *diskutieren* seem to be the perfect match to *estudar* and *discutir*, but they are not. While *studieren* means to attend a course in the University, *estudar* means study. *Diskutieren* means to discuss or debate, whereas *discutir* is more often referred to a verbal fight.

Calque

Calque was a very flexible strategy among users. They applied it to every sort of content word: nouns, verbs and adjectives.

16. (3) E está com a pressão muito baixa

Blood pressure is called *Blutdruck* in German but in Portugal the wording refers to “tension” *tensão arterial*. What happened here was that the German was literally translated to Portuguese keeping its original sense, which doesn’t come along the Portuguese term.

17. (14) a coisa vai começar a descer no sentido da morte

Interviewee 14 wanted to refer euphemistically to the downgrade of a person and decided to use a common German expression *bergab/abwärts*, which means going down the mountain or simply getting worse. But she translated it to Portuguese *descer* but as it doesn’t have the same references, she decided to add “death” to make sure it was understandable what she wanted to say. Something with the slight same meaning would be *ir por água abaixo*.

This is just a little sample of all the cases from the corpus, but they are enough to show that all linguistic areas are affected by the competition of languages. In this case German takes the lead as the major influence since the study was performed in a German speaking country, still, there were some evidences of influences from other languages.

Since this was a young community and the contact with the culture and the language is rather recent, it is not a surprise that even if all linguistic areas are affected, the majority of the deviants are in the lexical field. The Portuguese language is still very present in the lives of this community, but it is already obvious that it cannot cover all the language needs they have. Sometimes out of language management, sometimes out of help, users recur to the language they feel more comfortable with. There are cases where the speaker realizes that German is more efficient, adequate, short than Portuguese and this justifies their option, but others where it is visible that the speaker is confused, even if this is not conscious, what results in the creation of hybrid words and structures.

This investigation brings evidence to what happens with languages in contact in recent migrant communities, in the first phase of the language contact, showing that already after a short period a stable language can suffer some deviant behaviour, when the pressure of the competitor language is high.

LÍNGUAS EM CONTACTO: PORTUGUÊS EUROPEU ENCONTRA ALEMÃO AUSTRIACO

Resumo: As comunidades migrantes são o palco perfeito para a observação de fenómenos de contacto linguístico. A Áustria apresenta uma recente e, consequentemente, pequena comunidade portuguesa, e isto nos permitiu investigar o comportamento linguístico do português europeu num contexto germanófono. Estando o alemão austriaco em concorrência com o português europeu é natural que surjam interferências. No entanto, os falantes estarão conscientes desse

facto? Conseguem usar as línguas separadamente? Quais estratégias são usadas? As respostas a estas e outras perguntas poderão ser encontradas nesta investigação.

Palavras-chave: Emigração. Línguas em contacto. Interferências.

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