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Heritage language as identity: perspectives from the Azorean-American diaspora of New England. This article calls attention to the sociolinguistic invisibility of young heritage language learners of European Portuguese in New England. Through an exploratory analysis, based on ethnographic and sociolinguistic insights, we highlight the mismatch between top-down Portuguese language instruction policies and bottom-up language experiences in the Azorean-American diaspora in Massachusetts, affecting not only the academic success of those students but also their own ethnolinguistic identity. We critically analyze how a powerful standard language ideology, which is both monolinguist and monocultural, impacts language teaching policies, and thereby question the notion of a singular Portuguese heritage language that masks its internal diversity.
KEYWORDS: Portuguese linguistic variation; language ideology; sociolinguistic ethnography; Portuguese heritage language teaching.

Língua de herança e identidade: perspetivas da diáspora açoriana-americana em Nova Inglaterra. Este artigo chama a atenção para a invisibilidade sociolinguística dos jovens que aprendem Português Europeu como língua de herança na Nova Inglaterra. Através de uma análise exploratória, etnográfica e sociolinguística, destacamos o descompasso entre as políticas de ensino de língua portuguesa e as experiências linguísticas da diáspora açoriana-americana no Massachusetts, afetando não apenas o sucesso académico desses alunos, como também a sua própria identidade etnolinguística. Analisamos criticamente como a ideologia de língua padrão, monolíngue e monocultural, tem impacto nas políticas de ensino do português, questionando a própria noção de "língua portuguesa de herança" que esconde a sua intrínseca diversidade interna.
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: variantes da língua portuguesa; ideologia de língua; etnografia sociolinguística; ensino da língua portuguesa de herança.

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GIUSEPPE FORMATO

GRAÇA ÍNDIAS CORDEIRO

Heritage language as identity: perspectives from the Azorean-American diaspora in New England

INTRODUCTION

New England is a crossroads of people from throughout the world, including many Portuguese-speaking countries.[1] From Portugal to Cape Verde, and most recently Brazil, migrants settled in the Boston metropolitan area and established vibrant communities. Portuguese is the most spoken language at home other than English or Spanish in the states of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island (*American Community Survey*, 2018) due to the continuous inflow of immigrants as well as their desire to maintain the language in their communities.

Given the region's history as an intersection of Portuguese speakers with different origins and ethnicities, Portuguese presents diverse language variations and cultural backgrounds. Beyond the two standard varieties of Brazilian and European, include vernacular forms of Brazilian Portuguese (Holm, 2009; Rubinstein-Avila, 2005) and European Portuguese varieties originating in continental and, mostly, in insular Portugal, such as São Miguel Portuguese, an Azorean variety (Pap, 1949; Silva, 2005).

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Consequently, multigenerational interest in maintaining language and identity within these Portuguese-speaking communities depends on their contrasting origins and unique migratory histories. For many reasons, these multilingual descendants who study Portuguese as a heritage language are unique learners (Fishman, 2001; Valdés, 2001) and they differ significantly in their speaking ability and the variety of Portuguese with which they identify.

In losing heritage languages, each generation reveals a different level of investment, preservation, and maintenance of Portuguese in North America. Following an intergenerational shift, or the three-generation model of mother-tongue erosion from the adult immigrant generation to that of their grandchildren (Portes and Rumbaut, 2014, p. 336), we know that parental input is often insufficient for continuous development of a family heritage language; rather, wider linguistic input from more interlocutors and community support is needed, as well as formal instruction.

Therein lies a paradox. In the most highly concentrated region of diverse Portuguese heritage speakers in the United States, there is a lack of educational support for Portuguese heritage language learners. Portuguese language teaching is focused on Portuguese as a world or second language, with less focus on communities and heritage language(s). Moreover, there is a lack of substantial knowledge about the language diversity of local Portuguese language uses and the way people learn or try to improve their language skills through these variants. This unawareness is particularly evident regarding the insular European-Portuguese varieties which are nevertheless prevalent. The nonrecognition of Portuguese heritage variations directly affects potential heritage language learners (Kelleher, 2010) with their unique linguistic needs (Hornberger, 2005). Although familiar with the language, they appear in classrooms as foreign language learners, demotivated and prone to early course withdrawal, as Formato (2018) showed in his doctoral research relating motivation, language variety, classroom success, and how learners see themselves.

This article calls attention to these overlooked Portuguese heritage learners of Azorean origin, who who are often underrepresented in research on world language education programs in New England. We believe that this issue is only the "tip of an iceberg," an issue that has not yet become visible in the ideological language debate in neutral Brazil, Portugal, and elsewhere. The question that guides our discussion is: what lies below this iceberg? Or to be more specific: what are the key elements that contribute to the persistence of this decalage between Portuguese language classroom offerings and its potential learners? This question does not have an obvious answer, in part due to the relative dearth of research that has been done on Portuguese heritage language variants in the United States. Our focus is to critically explore the intersection

between the widespread use of local variants of Portuguese used in Azorean descendent communities in Massachusetts and the marginalization of these variant forms in Portuguese language education, to this day dominated by a standardized, monolithic ideology constructed upon monolinguistic and monocultural biases. This tension is the starting point of the analysis. We are specifically concerned with the negative impact that European Portuguese teaching practices have on the sociolinguistic identities of young Portuguese descendants of Azorean immigrants who are born, raised, and living in such a multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic urban environment.

The objective of this article is threefold: a) to draw attention to the invisibility of young heritage learners of Azorean descent in the secondary and higher education systems;[2] b) to identify and critically analyze key elements – historical, political-ideological, pedagogical, and didactic – that contribute to the concealment of and discrimination against these heritage language learners; and c) to question the notion of Portuguese heritage language in the singular, masking the internal socio-cultural diversity of this language.

Following these objectives, the main body of the article is organized into five sections: a) a critical overview of the "Portuguese heritage learner" internal construct within intra-linguistic diversity in Massachusetts; b) a methodological note on the exploratory analysis process resulting from a dialogue between the two authors; c) the empirical case that exposes the narratives of two students in their relationship within the ethnic community in which they are inserted; d) analysis and discussion of the key elements that contribute to the silencing of heritage learners; e) and final remarks.

Our analysis is exploratory and theoretically oriented by language ideologies (Woolard, 1994) as a framework to address the intricate connections between Portuguese language pedagogic planning and language use in a complex sociolinguistic landscape. The inseparable link between individual agency and plurilingual, pluricultural urban territory in which variants of Portuguese coexist and conflict with the acquisition processes of heritage learners, is central to this multidisciplinary reflection.

THE SILENCE OF AZOREAN SOCIOLINGUISTIC HERITAGES

In the United States, languages other than English are often considered foreign, yet many individuals have cultural connections to and know languages other than English. These languages are not foreign to those individuals; instead,

2 Reto et al. (2014) carry out a detailed survey of the situation of Portuguese teaching in the USA at elementary, secondary, and university levels.

they are familiar in a variety of ways: some people can speak, read, and write the language; others can only speak or understand when spoken to; and many may not understand the language but have family or a community where the language is spoken. Valdés (2001, pp. 37-38) best defines heritage language speakers as bilingual individuals who are familiar with a non-English language, sometimes speaking or at least understanding this ancestral language.

Although the term heritage language can be used to describe any of these connections between a nondominant language and a person, family, or community, the term heritage language learner, as defined by the authors of this article, describes a person who is studying a language and has proficiency in or a cultural connection to that language. Portuguese Americans, like other hyphenated Americans, may have been raised with strong cultural links to Portuguese language varieties through family contact as language learners – not necessarily speakers – with intrinsic motivation powered by their heritage. These are key incentives to acquire a language but may not be enough to describe linguistic understanding appropriately or to offer effective standards for recognizing heritage language learners.

Azorean-Americans whose parents immigrated between the 1950s and 1990s, are currently in high school and universities and encounter the language of their ancestors as a foreign language. Nevertheless, they may possess a rich knowledge of the events, celebrations, and gastronomy of the culture from which their relatives came. Thus, these heritage learners arrive at Portuguese class unlike other learners studying a foreign language – that is, they come with a rich treasure trove of their own Portuguese language culture. "Portuguese heritage learner" is a broad term, embodying many meanings depending on the social and cultural context of immigration. The pedagogic landscape for Portuguese instructors in Massachusetts presents a unique and deeply complex – though seldom visible – reality. This term must be allowed some elasticity; a heritage learner is a learner who, at times beyond a linguistic conception, possesses relevant cultural knowledge (Soares, 2012).

America's Languages: Investing in Language Education for the 21st Century is one of the strongest endorsements of language education on record (Carreira, 2018, p. 5). This report acknowledges the value of language education, expressing the desire to increase access to languages, including heritage languages. More discreetly, explicit national Portuguese policies also claim to support the projection of Portuguese as a language of identity in the diaspora worldwide (*Relatório da Emigração*, 2020). Yet, for many reasons, European Portuguese heritage learners are sometimes overlooked in Massachusetts, both in the heritage language teaching context of the United States and the Portuguese language policy as implemented by the Portuguese state.

Perhaps one factor that has contributed to silencing Portuguese heritage learners with Portuguese ancestry is the difficulty in quantifying them. Many heritage learners no longer speak Portuguese at home, which is a criterion for the statistical collection of foreign language usage, despite the vitality in many historical enclaves of people of Portuguese origin. Figures showing the number of Portuguese heritage learners are sparse, even though many students in Portuguese classes come from Portuguese communities or have Portuguese heritage.

Another cause of this silencing is the concentration of Portuguese-speaking immigration in just two coastal regions on the East and West coasts of the United States, contrary to Spanish-speaking immigration which extends throughout the United States. Although Portuguese is part of the linguistic landscape of these regions (Gorter, 2006), the language is of lesser relevance at the national level. Linguists' growing interest in the bilingual competence of Hispanic-descendant speakers (Flores, 2013, p. 3) and the intensification of research on Spanish heritage education contrasts with the lack of studies on "inheritance bilingualism" in the Portuguese language, which is still relatively recent in the field of linguistics research, particularly in Portugal (Beaudrie and Fairclough, 2012).

Yet another factor is that the few bibliographies available on Portuguese as a heritage language in the United States are mostly dedicated to Brazilian Portuguese due to the increase in international migration from Brazil in recent years and issues surrounding heritage languages in general (Chulata, 2018; Moroni, 2015). In the case of the European variant, the focus of heritage language studies has been focused more on European countries high in Portuguese immigrants, such as France, Germany, and the United Kingdom (Keating, Solovova and Barradas, 2013).

Among non-Portuguese-speaking countries, the United States has the oldest history of Portuguese emigration. Nevertheless, the largest receiving region of Portuguese immigration, New England, has conducted relatively little research on this subject with minimal impact on a wider academic discussion. (Ferreira, 2005; Ferreira and Gontijo, 2011; Serpa and Lira, 2011; Soares, 2012; Santos and Silva, 2015; Formato, 2018). Undoubtedly, there is a dearth of reflection specifically on the European Portuguese heritage language in the United States. The question Melo-Pfeifer (2018) presented in the title of her article, "Portuguese as a heritage language: which Portuguese? What language? What heritage?" adeptly describes the diversity of heritages of this pluricentric or polycentric language (Keating, 2022) which is simultaneously national and international, ranking as one of the most widely spoken languages in the world while also being a minority language because it is used in many different contexts of

immigration. Portuguese is characterized by its intermediate status, being both the "language of structure (national, official, institutional) and the language of action (of migrant minorities…)" as Keating, Solovova and Barradas (2013, p. 221) explains, referring to the European geopolitical space.

Portugal is a country with a long tradition of linguistic homogeneity and believes in the unity of the Portuguese language as an ideological object (Bagno, 2018). The idea of Lusophony (*Lusofonia*), an instrument of linguistic sharing spanning oceans – within an imagined community of former Portuguese colonies, now called "officially" Portuguese-speaking countries – is a powerful "linguistic-cultural ideology" (Faraco, 2016, p. 249) that tries to continue a successively imperial, colonial, and post-colonial narrative.

In a text dedicated to policies of teaching Portuguese in the Portuguese diaspora, Ferreira and Melo-Pfeifer (2018, p. 256) stated, "The linguistic policies are a mirror of the linguistic ideologies in circulation in a given historical space-time". Currently, the hegemonic view of language as being one, global, and international (Ferreira and Melo-Pfeifer, 2018, pp. 252-253), is what prevails in the guidelines for teaching language abroad. Hegemony is aimed at the "assessment-certification [of skills,] favoring the use of a normative and relocated Portuguese, free of marks of interlinguistic contacts". Emigrant communities are only mentioned in these hegemonic guidelines, omitting their specificities and status as a heritage language, not to mention their cultural significance. What is created is an opposition to what is being proclaimed and can cause heritage learners to become demotivated and unenroll from courses in countries with high numbers of potential learners (Formato, 2018). Blommaert (2012, p. 18) rightly stated, "The history of language planning across the globe is replete with unexpected (and often unwelcome and unhappy) outcomes".

Blommaert's claim is a focus of our study: the unfavorable outcome of Portuguese language planning in regions where there are so many potential heritage language learners, as is the case in the region of New England. The view of Portuguese as an abstract entity, stripped and decontextualized from the environments in which it is inserted and the identities of which it is a part, has reinforced standard language ideology, especially affecting minorities and migrants (McLelland, 2021, p.110). Undoubtedly, this monolithic representation of Portuguese has been a major obstacle to the knowledge of its internal diversity within the region, which accompanies the different sociolinguistic identities of the intrinsic twisting of time and space (Blommaert, 2015, p.106) in which they are situated.

AN EXPLORATORY AND COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

The approach is simultaneously descriptive and analytical, combining sociolinguistic and ethnographic perspectives. Through an exploratory analysis based on ethnographic insights of a Portuguese-speaking urban space and on students' perceptions from their classroom experiences, we try to expand from the experience of heritage learners to the sensorial and cultural spaces in which heritage learners live and multi-linguistically socialize through a range of activities. The local and wider context is presented as part of the meaning of heritage learners' experiences. Hence, "context is more than just background information" (Svalberg, 2016, p.10), since the linguistic landscape, as a tool for exploratory fieldwork, is a place thematized for individual learners' experiences. Historical, political, and ideological contextualization is crucial to understanding how the Portuguese language, in this context, is mediated by cultural ideology and sociolinguistic stratification (Blommaert, 2015, p. 113).

Inspired by the notion of time-space complexity (Blommaert, 2012), what interests us is the point of confluence between the individual perceptions of two Portuguese heritage language learners and the complex socio-spatial and political-ideological context, which is "multiplex, layered, mobile, and nonlinear" (Blommaert, 2015, p, 114). Perceptions from the experience of heritage learners are based on their socio-territorial belongings. Like Carreira and Kagan (2018, p. 157), we believe that "At the heart of heritage language education are the learners themselves: their needs, strengths, dispositions".

The proximity of Giuseppe Formato (an American-born language instructor and researcher, with Azorean and Southern Italian heritage,[3] living and working in Somerville, Massachusetts) immersed in this reality was the starting point for this reflection. Giuseppe met Graça Cordeiro (a Portuguese urban anthropologist from Lisbon, studying the uses and representations of the "Portuguese speaking" label in the same area) in the performative context of Portuguese feasts in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Since then, we have developed our interest and curiosity about the sociolinguistic significance of contact variant of the Portuguese language in this geographic area.

Our conversations began in January 2019, taking place weekly around the Cambridge-Somerville area. In those meetings, we shared fieldnotes, fieldwork diaries, observation logs, informal interviews, bibliographies, social media, and documentary analyses, from previous and current research. This analysis came from co-reading and co-writing of such materials, including fragmentary records as part of the ethnographic process. That is why we chose to use

3 See the interview with Giuseppe Formato conducted by Liliana Azevedo (2021).

descriptive narratives, which would incorporate one space of study with two individual voices.

Giuseppe, as an Azorean-American researcher, was vital to Graça's ethnographic exploration of this micro-territory due to their personal experiences. The territorial delimitation around the Boston-Cambridge-Somerville area served as both the biographical context of Giuseppe and the ethnographic context of Graça. In this conversation, we refined the double analytical exercise that our theoretical and personal knowledge of reality allowed us, improving our theoretical sensitivity (Strauss and Corbin, 2012) through collaborative research, as a collaborative ethnography (Lassiter, 2005) through a fruitful dialog between Giuseppe Formato's "home" as well as Graça Cordeiro's field experiences.

ON THE GROUND PERCEPTIONS: AZOREAN-AMERICAN PLACE-BASED HERITAGES

THE CONTEXT: A COMMUNITY OF INTEREST

The Boston city region, as defined by historian Sam Bass Warner (1999), is a metropolitan system where the daily commuting patterns of its residents set the boundaries. These comings and goings establish an urban social entity taking in all of eastern Massachusetts to the edge of Worcester County and extending to the first tier of New Hampshire cities and towns (Warner, 1969). Massachusetts is part of this large patch of interconnections and urban mobility designated as Greater Boston.

In this large area, the current Portuguese sociolinguistic landscape owes much to the permanence of enclaves of Portuguese ancestry, which helps us understand the metamorphoses of the Portuguese language in this region over almost two centuries. Since the end of the 19th century, this immigration, composed mainly of populations from the Atlantic islands of the Azores, Madeira, and Cape Verde (a Portuguese colony until 1975), was concentrated in some of the largest industrial cities in southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

However, these immigrants also settled to a lesser extent in a smaller central area, Cambridge, and Somerville (Ito-Adler, 1980; Pap, 1981), neighborhoods that are considered as part of Boston, although administratively they are not. Here, the most expressive Portuguese visibility is concentrated in an area that covers a small part of Somerville and Cambridge, around a central street: Cambridge Street. Despite the transformations of deindustrialization and gentrification that took place there, the Portuguese language continues to preside in the linguistic landscape of the area's eastern part which hosts

a small, yet visible, Portuguese community. For more than 100 years, this community has been a thriving ethnic Portuguese cluster (Cordeiro, 2019; Cordeiro, 2024).

The many forms of centrality of this place, emblematic of Portuguese ethnicity, are tangible. This neighborhood is a point of attraction for Portuguese American communities in various cities and towns scattered throughout the greater Boston area. The *Igreja Católica Romana de Santo António*, the *Filarmónica de Santo António* and clubs, among which the *Clube Desportivo Faialense*, are spaces for congregating and organizing *festas*, such as the transnational Holy Ghost (Leal, 2017; Cordeiro and Formato, 2024) and the local Saint Anthony festivals and processions, that attract many people. Such ritual practices are undoubtedly a point of confluence for Portuguese individuals and descendants who visit from other cities in Metro Boston and for the creation of Portuguese diplomatic and consular initiatives, such as the *Boston Portuguese Festival*. Cambridge-Somerville is a true node of a markedly Azorean and historically consolidated Portuguese network that marks the linguistic landscape of this area by ways of speaking and celebrating. The neighborhood's public Portuguese visibility covers not only visual signs (Gorter, 2006) but also sounds, smells, colors, and flavors emerging from some pinnacle moments of Portuguese sociability that are part of the urban fabric of this territory: toponymy; commemorative plaques; façades of clubs; the public library; headquarters of the Portuguese parish; and above all, cyclical (seasonal) feasts.

The internal reality of Cambridge Street is therefore quite heterogeneous, witnessing this cumulative history of Portuguese-speaking occupation over time. In terms of speech, oral communication ranges from *Portinglês*, to São Miguel Portuguese to *Minho-Duriense* (North Portugal), and more recently, varieties from Brazil. These are the most used Portuguese variants, from the cultured norm of numerous elite students and academics to the most popular vernaculars of the different Brazilian states and Portuguese regions from which labor immigrants came and still come. In addition to the shops, restaurants, beauty salons, etc., bearing witness to this same type of heterogeneity is the church of Santo António, founded by Portuguese immigrants in 1903 and renovated in the 1980s by the same community. Today, this church serves as the stage for parties, celebrations, and masses, which are held separately in the Brazilian and European Portuguese variants, in addition to English. If the outside perspective identifies Portuguese as one of the markers of this linguistic landscape, a closer look removes the idea of Portuguese as a language of identity, revealing an intra-linguistic community and cultural diversity that is indisputable but not seen in the ideological and political representation of a single Portuguese language.

In this local context, we could say that Portuguese usage is a source of pride. In the educational context, however, this is not the case. Younger generations learn Portuguese to strengthen connections and familiarity with the sociolinguistic community of their heritage; however, they have been frustrated, feeling like foreigners in their own land.

Regarding her research in schools in this region that serve as pioneers in Portuguese bilingual programs, Rubinstein-Avila expressed in 2001 that linguistic and cultural variations within the so-called minority languages of bilingual programs have only recently been addressed in the literature. Also, university programs offering sizeable Portuguese courses are located within this area, including Boston. Portuguese is taught in doubly mixed classes: as a second language for both varieties, Brazilian and European Portuguese, and as a heritage language for immigrants (mainly Brazilians and Cape Verdeans) and descendants of immigrants (Portuguese and, to a lesser extent, Cape Verdeans), as mentioned by Ferreira and Gontijo (2011). However, to the knowledge of the authors of this article, there currently exist no heritage language courses focusing on insular varieties of European Portuguese.

VANESSA'S VOICE

As a Portuguese-language teacher in a public high school (2013-2014) near this Portuguese enclave, Giuseppe Formato met several Portuguese heritage speakers, such as Vanessa (pseudonym), a 14-year-old freshman living in Somerville.[4] Vanessa's mother came from the island of São Miguel, in the Azores. Vanessa was taking Portuguese 1 CP (college prep) as a freshman at this high school. The class was made up of 14 students, all between the ages of 14 and 15. Somerville High School was at the time one of the few schools near Boston which offered Portuguese as a foreign language at the high school level. Portuguese is part of the World Language Department, made up of French, Spanish, Italian, and, at that time, Mandarin. This course is for students who want to learn Portuguese and are complete beginners. The department faculty (including Giuseppe and another Portuguese instructor from Brazil) and the head of the department were responsible for creating aspects of the course. Objectives and standards were established by the State. Giuseppe was Vanessa's teacher. At the time, he had a master's degree in Applied Linguistics, in addition to passing a subject test through the State specifically for Portuguese and having been raised as a heritage learner with Portuguese heard often in the home.

4 A summarized version of Vanessa and Victor's testimonies, under different pseudonyms, was briefly referred to in another article by the authors. See Cordeiro and Formato (2022, pp. 740-741).

Vanessa had *Bom Dia 1* as her textbook, which was largely based on European Portuguese; however, it is a short book, which does not thoroughly address communities in the United States. Vanessa spoke passionately about being Portuguese and proudly identified as being from the Azores, although she had never visited there. Formato recalled moments of tension between them when Vanessa questioned the materials and methods used in the class (i. e., either standard Brazilian or European Portuguese). These materials lacked aspects of São Miguel Portuguese, the Azorean variety of Portuguese with which she was familiar and heard at home with her family and community. Regarding language, English loan words used in local insular varieties which differ from standard European Portuguese such as *a dóla* (o dólar; dollar), *a goma* (a pastilha elástica; gum), *a mapa* (a esfregona; mop), and *os candilhes* (os rebuçados; candies), just to offer a few examples, were all points of friction when in class she learned the standard term. She often remarked, "That's not how my mother says it. Does my mother not speak right? She's from Portugal," or "Can I say it like this? This is how we always say it," or "I've never heard it that way." In many instances, Vanessa would use these words in assignments or continue to say them in class.

Vanessa approached the course with an increasingly critical lens regarding syntax and pronunciation of São Miguel Portuguese and English. She extended this tone to Azorean culture, often noting how the Cult of the Holy Spirit and its festivities were absent from class materials and discussion, as was Azorean-American gastronomy, such as *biscoitos* (cookies), *papo-secos* (bread rolls) and *sopas* (soups). Her general frustration and gradual dismay with the language she had initially been excited to study – which she had considered hers only to discover it to be foreign, dealing with Brazilian samba schools and Lisbon neighborhoods more than her reality – led her to ultimately struggle in the course. This was also the Giuseppe's first year as a public-school teacher, for which he acknowledged his inexperience, which may have been a contributing factor to Vanessa's dismay in the course as they attempted to reconcile different materials, varieties, and topics covered.

VICTOR'S VOICE

In 2017, Giuseppe Formato also interviewed several Portuguese heritage learners as part of his doctoral research on their motivation, identity, and language acquisition in classes at the University of Massachusetts (UMass) Boston. Victor (pseudonym), a 21-year-old junior who enrolled in a beginner's Portuguese course as an elective, had maternal great-grandparents from the Azores; his father, who died when Victor was a child, was from Madeira. Victor expressed strong intrinsic motivation to learn Portuguese and traveled from his home in

Saugus, another Azorean community over 10 miles outside of Boston, to specifically attend Portuguese classes. Victor expressed that he also participated in Azorean celebrations not only in Saugus but would travel to the Cambridge and Somerville areas for feasts and processions, some of the same festivities about which Vanessa also highlighted and spoke so enthusiastically about.

Victor was taking a *Beginner Portuguese 1* course at UMass Boston at the time. This is a course designed for students who do not know any Portuguese, regardless of their background. It is part of the Latin American and Iberian Studies Department, which is made up of only one other language, Spanish. At this time, there was no minor in Portuguese, and Portuguese-related classes were limited only to language acquisition. The teacher, native to the north of Portugal, was a "Camões lecturer" and was largely responsible for the creation of the course; he coordinates the Portuguese Language Centre at this university. The lecturer holds degrees in Portuguese Literature from Portuguese universities. Victor's class at UMass Boston did not make trips to the communities, however, and Victor used the textbook *Ponto de Encontro*, which, at the time, although it is one of the only textbooks to address both Portuguese and Brazilian communities in the United States, only briefly discusses them in the final lesson, and thus does not fully address them, particularly if many introductory and intermediate courses do not arrive at this final chapter.

Although he was not fluent in the language and had never visited Portugal, Victor strongly identified as Portuguese. His motivation to learn stemmed from his desire to travel to Portugal and teach the language to his family. He described the Portuguese he knew as "broken" and "wrong," assuming the words he knew were incorrect, mispronounced, and nonsensical. Realizing his knowledge differed greatly from that being taught and discussed in class, he felt embarrassed about his Portuguese heritage variant and aspects of his familiarity with Portuguese. At the beginning of the course, Victor participated but was told that his examples of words and pronunciation were "not right." A particular example of this was the way he pronounced the preposition *de*, used as a final vowel sound with the São Miguel Portuguese [ü]. He told me the instructor once slightly laughed at this and said, "It's not really pronounced that way." Victor said he felt ashamed, as he distinctly remembered hearing people in his family using words with that sound, although he did not understand it, and was only trying to sound more like his family. After several embarrassments, he reported that his participation decreased, and he stopped drawing upon and sharing his own experiences. He also reported feeling ashamed about how his family had come to speak at home and, therefore, was determined to learn the "right" way, which Victor learned through his instructor, was the only way, or so it seemed.

PORTUGUESE VARIANTS, BETWEEN PRIDE AND SHAME

Language and identity are discursive effects of social interaction. They create meanings and are socially constructed. They are multiple, moving, inconsistent, and inhibited by unequally delineated symbolic and material confines (Silva, 2015). Vanessa's and Victor's cases show Portuguese heritage usage versus that of language classes – the former unfixed and fluid and the latter constrictive and dominant. Speakers, such as Vanessa, see language as a symbol of social identity; that the foods, traditions, culture, and familiar pronunciation from her community that were considered inappropriate in class often translated to a denial of her identity. Victor manifested ultimate embarrassment about his identity because his linguistic and cultural knowledge were considered incomplete or wrong.

Linguistic exchanges occur in positioned markets; language becomes a symbolic instrument of power to define legitimate speakers and social actors that control resource production and distribution. This power struggle is apparent to some extent in Vanessa's and Victor's cases: both wanted to learn Portuguese to better connect with their families and communities and to identify, restore, and transmit information about their identity. The allocation of resources is disproportionate, restricting a person's actions and resulting in social categorization and disparity. It is a process based on historical circumstances, rather than a fixed structure. People's internalized and socially constructed ways of being in the world can hinder their capacity for agency.

Sociolinguistic performances have observable consequences for how people position themselves and are positioned by others. Managing the legitimacy of certain ways of speaking and acting is linked to the dissemination of symbolic resources that favor one group over another; speaking or acting outside the structure is almost impossible because it is grounded in power-laden histories reproduced in current social conditions. These cases subtly demonstrate such performances. Vanessa positioned herself as staunchly Portuguese and proudly Azorean; however, the linguistic hegemony in the classroom (via the instructor, language, materials, imagery, etc.) questioned the legitimacy of her identity. Portuguese-language materials favored certain ways of being a Portuguese speaker and represented them in ways that were alien to Vanessa. Her symbolic resources (e.g., Cult of the Holy Spirit and Azorean bread rolls) lack legitimacy from hegemonic Portuguese performances resulting from the peripheral position she, her family, and her community held in the Portuguese-speaking world.

Language, power, and identity are at the center of our reflection. The mismatch or gap between the language teaching model that is unilaterally imposed

on schools and universities and the needs of some heritage learners with multilingual socialization erases the motivation to learn or improve Portuguese (Formato, 2018). Vanessa's and Victor's testimonies reveal some aspects of the teaching of Portuguese that are unsuitable for a part of their target audience, such as mixed classes, textbooks, and instructors.

One aspect concerns the organization of mixed classes, combining second language learners and heritage learners. In this region of the United States, it is common for classes to include many heritage learners; however, the teaching model is largely presented as learning a second language, imposing a way of teaching that is not always inclusive of heritage learners and their unique perspectives.

Textbooks and other materials, at the time this article was written, are also aimed at second language learners, sometimes having a predominant national approach – in the standard linguistic variant and on a cultural dimension – which, for example, is Portuguese (*Bom Dia*) or Brazilian (*Brasil! Língua e Cultura, Bate Papo: An introduction to Portuguese*, *Português para Principiantes*, etc.) or both (*Ponto de Encontro*). All of these materials feature Portugal and/or Brazil, with references to the other Lusophone countries (former Portuguese colonies). These references reify "typical" traits of these countries; an imaginary Lusophone "identity" composed of several nationalities, all of which are outside the reality of many local heritage learners who feel like outsiders in Portuguese classes. Cultural materials may be decontextualized from the often vastly different local realities of where speakers exist in time and space.

Learning Portuguese is a highly personal endeavor and, for many, a way to have better relations with family. For Portuguese descendants, many of whom are from the Azores, with some oral but little writing and reading capacity, it is important to validate the familial variant. Because heritage learners may resist using the more normative Portuguese variants, instructors rarely use the dominant Portuguese variety as an additive to the heritage learner's repertoire (Furtoso and Rivera, 2013). Instructors are, in many cases, non-Americans who are trained in literature, but not in a sociolinguistic-related field, which leads to a common lack of awareness of the biased relationship their students have with their communities of origin. This lack of recognition may lead them to classify the linguistic background of their students as incorrect, as both Vanessa and Victor felt. These attitudes in the classroom reinforce the use of language as one of the factors of mild linguistic discrimination, which can present itself as a monolithic entity of power. Language ideology has not been a topic of debate among educators who function as socializing agents and see the teaching process as "purely technical" (Rubinstein-Avila, 2001, p. 67).

The identification of the sociolinguistic stigmatization of insular Portuguese speakers in immigration contexts is not a new topic. In 2005, Ferreira drew attention to Portuguese heritage learners in Southeastern Massachusetts, noting both their diversity – Azoreans, Madeirans, Cape Verdeans, their descendants, and Brazilians – as well as the "marked linguistic prejudice initially revealed by learners concerning oral varieties'" (p. 848). This stigmatization would result in linguistic prejudice internalized by Azorean and Madeiran learners concerning their home varieties, adding that, "Very often students wanted to be corrected or wanted the instructor to provide the 'correct form' of a language structure…" (p. 860). Her study points to the need to address issues of standard varieties, linguistic prejudice, and motivational factors in teaching Portuguese as a heritage language.

An identical process of sociolinguistic stigmatization is analyzed by Silva (2013, p. 160) in Canada when he mentions that young people of Azorean descent preferred silence so as not to be criticized for the way they speak. A process of "othering" occurs for current Portuguese heritage speakers and learners in the educational system where the heteroglossia of Portuguese is marked by a tension between the forces of uniformity, standardization, and the centrifugal forces of difference (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 189).

Sometimes, heritage language learners are viewed as second-class citizens and are silenced in the classroom context. This sensation of displacement characterizes a condition of many heritage learners: They wander through the educational landscape in a nomadic-like fashion, reflecting the dominant culture's reluctance to value the concept of "the other."

FINAL REMARKS

The invisibility of Portuguese heritage language learners is, therefore, just the tip of the iceberg of a complex ideological system (Guardado, 2018). The teaching policy for this language, sometimes led by Portugal, is not aimed at potential heritage learners, but rather learners of a foreign language, and thus presents a contradiction between Portuguese teaching policy and the interest of communities of Portuguese origin in maintaining Portuguese as their language of identity. In the words of Ferreira and Melo-Pfeifer (2018, p. 248), the effect of this ideology on European Portuguese teaching policy in the diasporas is a fallacy, as it uses "frames of reference with a homogenizing tendency" and whose teachers may adopt a decontextualized approach in teaching Portuguese to students of insular European Portuguese ancestry. The prevalence of a monocultural and monolingual ideology of European Portuguese taught abroad, according to national models (from Portugal) through the imposition

of a certain orthodoxy (Ferreira and Melo-Pfeifer, 2018, p. 240), therefore, has the opposite effect of the advocated, which would attract more heritage learners. The image of Portuguese as the "official language of a European nation-state historically constructed as monolingual […] invested as a modern language, with international and world prestige that, evoking Lusophony as added value, silence multilingual repertoires" (Keating, Solovova and Barradas, 2013, pp. 222-223) is imposed, with, the authors of this article arguing, sometimes negative effects on the vitality of European Portuguese and its variants in the Portuguese diaspora.

The non-recognition of local variants by the different agents involved in teaching European Portuguese in Massachusetts persists, often going unrecognized. Since English language varieties are largely implicitly ignored or explicitly shunned in classrooms across nations, language variety in other languages is easily overlooked (Rubinstein-Avila, 2001, p. 80). This fact, therefore, makes classrooms sometimes places of disagreement rather than approximation between teachers and European Portuguese heritage learners. The attitudes, methods, contents, and materials of teaching Portuguese are often decontextualized from the sociolinguistic environment of the multicultural and multilingual communities of Portuguese descent from which the learners come. Rather than highlighting the unique cultural and historical importance of the students' origins and their rich cultural legacies which contribute to the vibrant fabric of local demographics, their experiences are at times overshadowed and even silenced, thereby disrupting language acquisition. This educational approach reproduces existing power relations, narrowing the range of European Portuguese identities that individual language learners can claim for themselves.

A reassessment of these practices and the language of such institutions is needed to work towards adequately recognizing and therefore validating these speakers, their varieties, and the communities they represent in a more linguistically inclusive and realistic representation of European Portuguese as it exists. As Joseph (2010, p. 10) states, "Dialect differences exist everywhere – so it is rational to suppose that this is not a 'design error' in human language… They signal social belonging".

A manifold perception of these unique learners would validate their distinctive, complex circumstances and bring attention to the complicated sociolinguistic landscape they inhabit. This landscape is ever-changing, dependent on mixed national language ideologies, highly emotionally charged dimensions of association with language variety (in the cases of this article insular European Portuguese) as an identity factor, and a strong source of belonging, self-identification, and perception. Citing Bloemmard (2012, p. 7), "The

sociolinguistic diagnostic can become a diagnostic of social, cultural and political structures inscribed in the linguistic landscapes".

European Portuguese varieties in Massachusetts may risk the same global reification of the Portuguese language, sustained by a complex ideological framework that diverges from the unity of the language in an idealized, sanitized, and mythical conception, excluding and stigmatizing the less prestigious variants. Portuguese as a heritage language is not singular but plural in its heritage learners and speakers. This implies the assumption that intra-linguistic diversity constitutes the Portuguese language in its multiple and dynamic variants, such as the European Portuguese American vernacular, with close associations to local practices, festivities, traditions, and celebrations as the cases of this article demonstrate. Otherwise, these learners' reality of Portuguese is, to some extent, denied. As Anzaldúa (1987, p. 59) writes, "I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself." It is, then, necessary to rethink what we have called Portuguese, as Lopes (2013, p. 19) affirms.

In summary, the recruitment of instructors aware of linguistic diversity is strongly needed, which may result in a better understanding of some local forms of European Portuguese as a mosaic of variants spoken outside of official borders and grammar. Such a broader representation of the *Lusosphere* may provide extra space for an instructor-student discussion of the realities of the Portuguese language, its local contexts, and their very intimate significance for students in the classroom. The authors of this article agree with Freire in that, "what the educator does in teaching is to make it possible for the students to become themselves" (Horton et al. 1990, p. 181).

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