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Lexicon pluricentrality and pluricircularity in Portuguese language varieties

Abstract: By focusing on the linguistic relationships developed since the Age of Exploration, this chapter challenges the colonial reasoning according to which languages fall into a hierarchy and which is based on binary oppositions such as central *vs.* peripheral¸ empire metropole *vs.* colony, linguistic purity *vs.* linguistic impurity. We examine the pluricircularity of lexical items found between Portuguese language varieties as spoken in Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, and Macao, which ultimately indicates language pluricentrality. Our source of language samples was a particular kind of literary production that has crossed the cultural borders between the Portuguese empire metropole and local communities. This sort of literary work denotes a circular movement in which words and expressions are dynamically coined by communities from particular geographic, emblematic places and eventually – sometimes unexpectedly – are found in other language varieties.

Keywords: pluricentric language; pluricircularity; Portuguese varieties; lexicon

1 Introduction

The Portuguese language is geographically ingrained in many parts of the world as in a map where the contacts made between the Portuguese navigators and other peoples could be tracked and traced. Once they had settled in places like Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, and Macao, to name a few, the Portuguese experienced identity dilapidation and faced a social history of a varied nature with the local population. In each of those places, Portuguese language varieties were then brought into existence in different times and with different particular features, though not always perceived by CPLP (Community of Portuguese Language Countries) members as far as usage pathways – and particularly origin – are concerned. As a result, dictionaries with etymology entries are required to distinguish linguistic features of local

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language usage from remaining traces of the early contact with the then metropole of the Portuguese empire.

There is, however, a dynamic process that implies circular moves – a particular usage is spread out to local Portuguese whereas a new meaning or maybe a new form is transmuted and sent back to this circular movement between contacts. One can witness such *pluricircular* dynamics from several analytical spots in order to grasp some aspects of the linguistic and cultural relationships between communities in contact. From this perspective, the *pluricircularity* concept implies that items circulate in more than one Portuguese language production center, both in written texts and spoken language, due to unexpected historical moves where items are embedded in a language with no regionalism marks. Such moves would thus denote different contact degrees between those communities.

The most commonly explored issue to investigate language and usage integration is the space where codeswitching and diglossia phenomena occur. That space is utterly primary for the very reason that it is transversal not only to these phenomena, but also to other related to language and grammar constitutition. Moreover, it ensures a spot from which one can envisage a reconstructed, shared linguistic landscape that has enhanced the Portuguese language throughout the centuries. This spot is the lexicon. We will, thus, adopt an approach where both language and culture are acknowledged as fundamentally dynamic, hybrid, mixed, multifaceted, and therefore admittedly impure.

To that end, we will take lexicon as an object of study to argue that Portuguese languages should be considered in their own pluricentric status (since they occur between interconnected centers), and likewise in their roles as both influencing and influenced agents in colonial and post-colonial times. Despite the attempt of power forces to elect a particular language and culture as hierarchically superior to the languages and cultures of colonized communities, the sociolinguistic and cultural dynamics will ultimately prevail over such forces as a result of the unbeatable human action towards crossing borders and mixing to others.

This chaper discusses evidence of the dynamic process described above by exploring some outcomes that stemmed from the so-called "cultural borders" of linguistic contact in a movement that is oftentimes not so obvious. In order to better understand this approach, we should firstly acknowledge that the difference between "high culture" (Bourdieu 1983) and "genuine and spurious" culture (Sapir 2012) is by no means applicable here. The reason lies on the fact that one cannot block off the lexicon to distinguish high or low cultures within it, no matter what analytical level. A usage contextualized word that is detached from local use would

be equivalent to Gertz's (2008)[1] analogy of the violin as an anthropological object. In other words, it cannot be perceived by itself and should instead be interpreted in its everyday use and in a context where human beings are engaged in interaction.

Along these lines, our research source is a specific type of literary work that has crossed the borders between Portuguese and local cultures. This sort of literary work denotes a circular movement in which words and expressions are dynamically coined by communities from particular geographic, emblematic places and eventually – sometimes unexpectedly – are found in other language varieties. Thus, African-based (Angola and Cape Verde), American-based (Brazil), and Asian-based Portuguese languages comprise the linguistic landscape in their own spaces while they are nonetheless claimed as local lexical items in the linguistic landscape of other communities with apparently no migratory origin.

2 Unicentrality, pluricentrality, and decentrality

Fixedness and unicentrality are some of the features that have historically been highlighted to describe such concepts as language, identity, culture, and society. In a search for world views of the modernity era and in line with colonial ideology practices, realities used to be outlined on the grounds of binary concepts such as standard *vs.* non-standard, civilized *vs.* barbarity, colonizer *vs.* colonized, norm *vs.* deviance, center *vs.* periphery. However, all those binary concepts are actually challenged and deconstructed by post-modern approaches. What was once considered as the center, for instance, will be destabilized and make way for a plural, decentralized perspective.

In binary reasoning, human contacts as explicitly indicated in languages fall into a hierarchy that is ranked by static criteria. These criteria are based on a culturally geographic, center-modelled European core that serves as a pattern for defining/assessing all other spaces mostly as dystopic or at least deviating from the prescribed path. It then follows that most Western knowledge about other worlds takes its own reality as a core pattern, which ultimately leads to critically distorted concepts in the humanities field.

In that sense, assuming that the linguistic production in a former colony could be part of a purportedly pure, imaginary language of the former empire metropole

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1 "To play the violin it is necessary to possess certain habits, skills, knowledge, and talents, to be in the mood to play, and (as the old joke goes) to have a violin. But playing the violin is neither the habits, skills, knowledge, and so on, nor the mood, nor (the notion believers in 'material culture' apparently embrace) the violin (. . .)" (Geertz, 2008, p.9)

is nothing but sociocultural obscenity, to say the least. However, in an attempt to understand the world from the movement perspective (Lima-Hernandes & Teixeira e Silva 2020), several approaches were developed in the mid- and late 20th century to challenge the binarism on which realities have epistemologically been erected. The movement perspective has yielded new references to approaching society and cultural practices, such as change, transitoriness, cross-contextualization, border fogging, hybridism, and miscegenation (Teixeira e Silva 2012) to challenge how stable and sound such traditions really are, given that they have been used to organize communities quite superficially. In a continuous and paradoxical way, these traditions also fall short of consistency in contexts where circularity shading elements are taken into consideration.

> These explicitly marked traces for organizing communities – particularly urban ones – make it mandatory to rethink (thoroughly, if such is the case) concepts that have been established and settled by different research traditions that still serve as a guideline to understanding the world at both micro- and macro-levels[2]. (Lima-Hernandes and Teixeira e Silva 2020:43)

These studies are meant to promote decentrality in a such a way as to foster a debate on linguistic pluricentrality.

Some fundamental concepts that underlie this discussion are those of globalization (Blommaert 2011), (post)multiculturalism (Vertovec 2010) and super-diversity (Vertovec 2007a, 2007b). The process of globalization promoted economic, sociocultural, and political expansion in worldwide bases. It started, with the colonizer, included the Portuguese, during the period of the Great Navigations in the 16th century. With the advent of the technological revolution, this process gained strength and promoted a superdiversification of the diversities of individuals' experiences. Within this process, the human mobility also gained strength and, especially in urban areas around the planets, people from very different origins are in interaction. However, as argued by Blommaert (2011), globalization did not erased differences to create a global village. On the contrary, global aspects are rethought and reinvented in local environments, recreating in different parts of the globe different ideas, values, beliefs and so on. Globalization then promoted the creation of symbolic spaces characterized by what we have called multiculturalism. Multiculturalism has been used to indicate the plurality of many contemporary societies, and it emphasizes a supposed coexistence between communities with different cultural backgrounds. The conception of post-multiculturalism, on the contrary, addresses a series of criticisms of multicultural projects, which, in undertaking the perspective of respect for differences, they also created a series of measures that led to the isolation of communities in contact (Vertovec 2010). Multi-

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2 Our translation.

cultural measures allowed many groups to exercise their rights to speak their own language, to go to their own schools, to worship their beliefs and values. However, they triggered the formation of sociocultural islands in forced but with disconnected neighborhoods, and neighboring citizens unprepared to live with their diversity. Many multicultural projects, thus, didn't succeed because they failed to engender quality interaction between communities and to promote a decrease in segregation between groups. Vertovec (2010: 85) points out that

> Census and other social surveys in numerous countries indicated deep and enduring patterns of inequality among ethnic minorities (by now in their second or third generation after the original immigrants): low educational attainment, high unemployment, poor jobs, low income, bad quality housing, ill health and little social mobility.

Blommaert (2011) points out also the same problems in a sociolinguistic perspective. The language changes in society reconfigured the power relations between communities, nations and, therefore, between languages. In this sense, we can witness a significant process of sociolinguistic inequality that underlines human interactions.

In the field of intercultural relations, we must refer not only to the cultural diversities that constitute subgroups in each society[3] but, today, due to the ever-increasing exchange, cultural diversity between peoples of different societies that inevitably are and should be in contact, and therefore need to interact in the "real" or "virtual" world. This new context leads us to what has been referred to as super-diversity spaces (Vertovec 2007a, 2007b, 2010; Blommaert and Backus 2013; Blommaert and Ramptom 2011), in which the characteristics of international migrations and the globalization of virtual environments as a space for interaction, have brought new confrontations that lead us to question not only the concepts of language, identity, culture and society, but to rethink the configuration of their mutual dynamics.

The incalculable growth of contact between different cultures has promoted an unprecedented increase in intercultural, inter-ethnic, interlingual relations not only in institutional contexts such as work and study, but in the media, internet and

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3 In the theoretical perspective that we adopt, we assume that each group, subgroup, in the same society, creates its own cultural traits and is created by them. In interactions, all these traits (**which are languages and interaction/languages**) become present, contributing to the joint elaboration of interactions that promote the complexities and contradictions that we live and witness. In this sense, when we use the word society we do not refer to a homogeneous space in which subjects share the same linguistic-cultural traits or repertoires, but to communities of practice whose subjects are involved in diversified social networks and communities of practice (Vanin 2009; Eckert 2000).

other non-institutional contexts, in mobility of subjects and texts in geographical and cybernetic spaces.

> Super-diversity is a term intended to capture a level and kind of complexity surpassing anything many migrant-receiving countries have previously experienced. Immigrant superdiversity is distinguished by a dynamic interplay of variables, including their country of origin (comprising a variety of possible subset traits such as ethnicity, language[s], religious tradition, regional and local identities, cultural values and practices), their migration channel (often related to highly gendered flows, specific social networks and particular labour market niches), and their legal status (including myriad categories determining a hierarchy of entitlements and restrictions). (Vertovec 2007a: 03)

The emphasis here is that if the "other" seemed to be relatively more specific and identifiable, now, at this juncture, the "other" cannot be defined, simply, from social, cultural, political, or linguistic characteristics – the "other "is unpredictable. The challenge here is to discuss the role and nature of languages in this postcolonial and super-diversified world, and the cultural, linguistic and social features of the human contacts. In the same way, under a new sociolinguistic perspective, in the level of lexicon, the challenge is to reveal that what seems to be there since always, in fact made a movement from places to places and became in such way local that the circularity of the word is not identifiable.

Multiculturalism does not presuppose interculturalism. Many multicultural **spaces**, for example, promote for many communities traumatic experiences of submission, oppression and isolation, keeping a huge group of people out of the possibility of full exchanges. We touch here on the question of the inequalities that these various groups create, to which they are subjected and which also boost a movement of resistance (Foucault 1972). Consequently, when we talk about intercultural relations, and linguistic contacts, we are talking about the experience of even a few. Assuming language, culture, identity and society with its constitutive unpredictability and procedural character is an uncomfortable/rough challenge, but it also seems to be a path to possible intercultural interaction. All these new configurations of the world leaded to the necessity of new theories and concepts.

In the second half of the 20th century, new research trends broke off from mainstream scientific traditions and suggested new references for cultural studies. Languages were then approached in their concentric diversity as well as the wide expressiveness of semiotic systems that along with languages have shaped up sociocultural spaces. Several studies started to include gesture systems (other than those that comprise sign languages), physical arrangements of interaction spaces (ways to reinforce or withdraw the other from their speech based on spatial arrangement), the act of looking (the various ways to adhere to or reject discourses), objects and the ways they are handled, and so forth. More strikingly, this new trend to reconsider the central role of language while construing the world has been explored by

Pennycook (2018) in what he refers to as posthumanism. Such new epistemologies have paved the way to acknowledge circularity in sociocultural and linguistic practices that challenge the deeply rooted assumption of one single privileged, dominant center or even one single direction to be taken while adopting usages. This attitude is held on the borders[4]:

> The border concept and theory comprise one way to see the world from the inside out and therefore dismisses other ways of considering logical tradition grounded on modernity and colonialities. The knowledge that arises on/from a border is thus regarded as something that comes from all surrounding spaces in a decentralized, plural manner. Consequently, such knowledge will dismiss established researchers and scholars and will likewise welcome all other people with no prior structuring thought. Standing on the borders is like exposing oneself to what goes around them and has been silenced in other spaces[5]. (Teixeira e Silva 2022)

If we consider the border as the place for difference, malleability, and flexibility, we can surely assume that the lexicon is one of the borders where we can acknowledge and spread the human coproduction of languages, cultures, and identities from a plural perspective. As we put lexicon into actual use, we assign an agent role to voices and become subjects of communities that make up their own realities while shaping their own speeches. In that sense, we suggest that the relationships between different realities and produced by different communities are legitimate instances of continuous, plural human creation rather than mere deviating or peripheral productions. This is our baseline to dismiss unicentrality as inadequate and to emphasize that lexical pluricentrality (Murh 2012, 2016, 2020; Soares 2018; Moita Lopes 2012; Clyne 1992) as well as decentrality are the motivating factors for pluricircularity.

3 Pluricentrism in Portuguese

As the studies on languages, cultures, and identities developed, a historical scenario was set where Portuguese as a colonializing language was opposed to the Portuguese spoken by other communities. The first perspective lay in the long-established anachronic, unicentric vision according to which there is only a one-way

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4 As Sartin (2016) argues in her research on the geographic borders between Elvas (in Portugal) and Olivenza (in Spain), identarian borders are actually set up in a fluid manner. This is apparently contradictory because a border is the place where one of the two fragmentary logics would be embraced. However, those who live by the borders are wide aware that having malleable/flexible ideas and behavior is the key to keeping the hybrid nature of a border. The same is applicable when Pina Cabral (1993) refers to Macanese people as "bamboos".
5 Our translation.

cultural relationship. Contrastingly, the second perspective – of pluricentric nature – claims that world languages are (re)invented in different places by different groups, subjects, and communities which are not limited by or within any particular geographic landmarks. Not only do communities acknowledge or interact with one another, but also explicitly experience linguistic-cultural traces from different communities.

The debate on language pluricentralism gained an important milestone in Clyne's (1992) work. The author refers back to Kloss (1978), who had coined the term, and compiled a set of works to examine the pluricentric nature of several languages. He also helped to establish classifying criteria which were later sorted out by Muhr (online)[6] on the grounds of Clyne (1992:01), Muhr (2012: 30), and Muhr (2016:16), as explained in the concept below:

> A pluricentric language is a language that is used in at least two nations where it has an official status as state language, co-state language, or regional language with its own (codified) norms that usually contribute to the national/personal identity, making the nation a norm-setting centre by the deliberate use of the norms native to this specific nation. (Muhr 2016: 16)

Based on the defining criteria above, there appears to be no doubt that Portuguese is a pluricentric language. However, Muhr (2016) focuses on some aspects that are still connected with 20th-century conceptions such as "nation", "official language", "state language" and so on. This concept has led to relevant progress in the field – since it helps to dispute unicentralities and takes as legitimate other centers where different norms are produced – but nevertheless resorts to a binary framework based on the normative. It then follows that the non-normative is likewise considered and the debate on language, cultures, and identities will still be held from a dichotomy perspective. Maybe talking about centers or pluricenters can lead to new hierarchizations. In that regard, this concept requires a more substantiated approach where a debate is held on the basis of novel world arrangements as referred to in the former section: globalization, (post)multiculturalism, and super-diversity.

In the particular case of the Portuguese language, these new arrangements highlight conflicting views about world and language colonization, and the perception that language production thrives in microinteractions appears to be neglected. In addition to being the key cultural cells where cultural exchange is made possible, microinteractions will actually show the nature of languages, that is to say, languages are human processes that undergo continuous change. Taken as macropolit-

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6 Muhr, Rudolf. *What is a pluricentric language?* (2022, February 08). Retrieved from: https://pluricentriclanguages.org/pluricentricity/what-is-a-pluricentric-language/.

ical entities, norms wipe out not only language mobility, but also the pluricircularity that unveils human contacts and is nevertheless still neglected, as discussed here.

Let us take the new Portuguese Language Orthographic Agreement as an example. The reactions to its enforcement denote an attempt to consider languages as pure constructs that are connected to an epicenter. The debate further led to linguistic prejudice and xenophobia, among other issues. Muhr (2020) refers to that as he showcases the conflicting views about different norm-prescribed linguistic productions. In a description based on the former century, Baxter (1992) also pointed out divergent views about the Portuguese languages in the world, whereas Oliveira (2016) suggests the international, non-colonialist management of worldwide Portuguese languages. However, the so-called language production centers are actually way more spread out than the grammatical normative macrovisions prescribed and managed by what is referred to as nations and that somehow is underline these academic reflections.

In spite of such macrovisions and macropolitics, human contact develops a new space where the productions of languages still referred to as world Portuguese languages revisit one another and display the decentralized unceasing development of Portuguese languages from different communities. This is the pluricircularity phenomenon, which can be identified on the grounds of lexicon and which challenges some concepts adopted in language studies from former centuries.

In a time of globalization, (post)multiculturalism, and super-diversity, this microvision on world languages might provide the grounds for dismissing normative linguistic tools whose aim is to promote homogeneity and therefore exclusion. This would enable us to acknowledge the interchangeable development of what is still referred to as Portuguese languages.

This is a turning point in the descriptive conception of both sociocultural and sociolinguistic phenomena because it argues for such a concept as *cross-* or at least *inter*culturality in its core sense (Welsh 2001). We agree with this perspective particularly because consistent data from research on intercultural relations (Lima-Hernandes and Fernandes 2021) have shown that the lexical and grammatical enhancement of different language varieties also shows, to a great extent, a circular movement of cultural enhancement.

Once a first linguistic-cultural contact is made, endless migratory dynamics will start out their course of action – under varied motivating factors – in their related spaces and will eventually expand cognitive, social, cultural borders and linguistic repertoires. There is ample evidence of the diffusion and circularity of vocabulary among the representative territories of the works we analyze. We could resort to the most obvious, which is the intense trade of goods and people between these spaces, but it was not only that. Evidence of this circularity was not only found among the Portuguese who traveled back and forth to colonial and metropole

lands. Other dynamics bolstered the movements between territories, as confirmed by Castro (1978: 11). The author draws our attention to,

> the trade that was conducted directly with the Nagôs who arrived in the city of Salvador two to three times a year, on sailboats coming from the city of Lagos [. . .] This trade had been practiced long before the abolition of slavery in Brazil, from the moment when former slaves began to reclaim the Gulf of Guinea in the early 19th century, settling there as traders, including in the trade of slaves[7]. (Castro 1978, p.11).

The resulting effects of this circularity in the various spaces where a new Portuguese language variety flourished are clear dynamics of exchanging, interacting, and moving closer and away. We therefore argue that the Portuguese language pluricentrality should be acknowledged and identified so as to wipe out logical world assumptions based on elusive dual concepts such as central *vs.* peripheral, empire metropole *vs.* colony, purity *vs.* impurity.

In our discussion, we will examine four spaces of Portuguese language production (namely Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, and Macao) to explore pluricentrality and mutual linguistic-cultural feeding. Those spaces will be revisited by investigating different literary works that are considered as local and representative of some presumably specific and *sui generis* aspects.

4 Methodology

According to Geertz (2004: 11), "the shapes of knowledge are always ineluctably local, indivisible from their instruments and encasements." This statement can lead to the understanding that the place of birth can be determinant of a supposed invariability of cultural identity, as well as to the understanding that each space produces forms of perception that will always be local. In the pluricentric Portuguese language world, where concepts are approached in a fluid manner, it is necessary to find a methodology that can fit in such framework and perspective. Based on this particular perspective, we will thus adopt some of the concepts described by Landscape Ecology (LE) (Bertrand and Bertrand 2007) which, in a broader sense, enable us to explore the interactions between landscape spatial patterns and ecological process. More particularly so, LE establishes that information should be sorted out on the basis of three categories of time – system time (i.e., lexical features), territory

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7 Our translation.

time[8] (i.e., social wrapping), and landscape time (i.e., cultural, identity features). We shall adapt Landscape Ecology to examine its relationship with concepts from the Theory of Metacommunity (Bennett and Gilbert 2017), where usages produced within metacommunity reasoning (Gergel and Turner 2017) allow us to focus on lexical change process marked by local diversity. Lexical instances, where a more abstract landscape can be disclosed, fail to stand within the limitations of the long-standing biunivocal "one place/one language" view and facilitate the access to a more fluid space-interaction view to the three sorts of time as described in the aforementioned works.

Our analysis methodology is outlined as follows: a contextual variable (landscape time) is represented by local production (Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, and Macao in this particular case). Given that each of those locations has undergone a colonization process, they are each related to some specific language contact situations (territory time), as well as to specific native lexical conditions (system time).

As territory and system times are connected, pluricentric dynamics turn out similar in each location and the results can be somewhat examined in pairs, especially when the focus lies on lexicon. Lexemes derived from a certain location will migrate to other landscapes and territories and will probably undergo changes in their initial form, spelling, morphology, semantics, and sound. They can also be integrated into the normative system as evidenced by the fact that they have been included as entry words in local dictionaries. As we unveil the usages found in literary works by hybrid writers[9] in both Portuguese and native languages, we will resort to writers who witnessed an experience of giving voice to local language and culture. The reason is that such writers lived in hybrid everyday communication spaces and unwillingly acted as seeds of lexical enlargement. In this reverse movement, native lexical items were inserted into the Portuguese lexicon that later circulated in other territories where Portuguese is spoken (that is, the pluricircular movement). Reversely, each identified item will be examined as being part of a pre-

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8 Here, the concepts of *territory* and *territorialization* are not those as prescribed by plain physical definitions traditionally applied in Land Geography. In this chapter, those concepts are used as in Human Geography (Santos, 2004) to claim that geographic space does not exist unless it contains human beings acting on the space around them and developing their sense of belonging. From this perspective, *place* differs from *space* as the latter includes human being acting in their own corporeality dynamics.

9 By hybrid writers we mean those who since their childhood lived in a place where they could witness the battle between native languages and the colonizer's language. Their home was therefore a place in which both languages were concurrent. This context caused them to live in a culturally mixed environment, thus qualifying them as representative of the plucircularity movement.

vious word stem in such a way as to, whenever possible, contrast it with its native etymology. The texts we selected for our analysis are the following[10]:

Table 1: Written Texts.

Writer's location	Writer's name	Short Story
(a) Angola	Uanhenga Xitu	*Manana*
(b) Brazil	Lima Barreto	*Triste Fim de Policarpo Quaresma*
(c) Cape Verde	Germano Almeida	*Estórias de dentro de casa*
(d) Macao	Deolinda da Conceição	*Cheong-Sam, a Cabaia*

(a) African context in Agola: *Manana*, by Uanhenga Xitú

Agostinho Mendes de Carvalho, a.k.a. Uanhenga Xitú, is a writer who brings together juxtaposed realities and distinguishes them in his writing style. According to Venâncio in 2012 Laudatio, "His texts – except *Mungo. Os sobreviventes da máquina colonial depõem. . .* (1980; 2002) – refer to [as a norm] Luanda city and hinterland villages such as Funda, Catete, Calomboloca, etc. which are 40, 110, 120km away from the capital city. That has been a region of remarkable Portuguese presence at least since the 16th century." Cultural and linguistic miscegenation – greatly justified by the Portuguese presence – is the stage to characters such as Manana and Filito in his novel *Manana* (1978). They are key characters in a world featured by the cultural shift from traditional to modern.

(b) Brazilian context in Rio de Janeiro: *Triste fim de Policarpo Quaresma*, by Afonso Henriques de Lima Barreto.

Born in 1881, Lima Barreto is a result of miscegenation. His father (a typographer) and mother (an elementary school teacher) were poor mixed-race individuals. He lost his mother at the age of seven. Despite all the prejudice he suffered due to his family roots, he was the godchild of Ouro Preto Viscount, which enabled him to attend the most renowned school in Rio de Janeiro, Colégio Pedro II. He later enrolled at the Escola Politécnica engineering program, but never managed to earn a degree – his father became ill and he was in charge of his family's expenses. He could tell exactly what discrimination and prejudice against people of black

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10 Corpus in this study:

Almeida, Germano. *Estórias de dentro de casa* – novelas. Lisboa: Editora Caminho, 1996.

Conceição, Deolinda da. *Cheong-Sam – A cabaia*. Macau: Instituto Cultural de Macau/Instituto Português do Oriente, 1995.

Lima Barreto, A.H. *Triste Fim de Policarpo Quaresma*. [1913]. Edição digital. Ministério da Cultura, Fundação Biblioteca Nacional. Disponível em: http://www.dominiopublico.gov.br/

Xitu, Uanhenga (Agostinho Mendes de Carvalho). *Manana*. Lisboa. Edições 70, 1978.

descent were. He worked as a civil servant and later as a journalist and writer not only because of his outstanding creative writing skills, but also because he used the Portuguese language in a style that varied from excessive normative formality to dialogues where the language used by foreigners and local people were a true picture of an attempt to add value to national issues, including the lexicon.

In the selected work, Lima Barreto focuses on the debate about the national status of Portuguese and Brazilian languages. The core character is Officer Policarpo Quaresma, an enthusiastic nationalist whose actions and words would nowadays sound ironic, though this was never meant by the character. As he compared national to foreign in language, he told quite an appealing story particularly due to the then strongly debated question of whether there was such a thing as a Brazilian language independent from that spoken in Portugal. This debate was held in various scenes from everyday language use to the Brazilian Academy of Letters. It is definitely a novel that plays an important role in our discussion on local landscape and the three time categories used in LE.

(c) African context in Cape Verde: *Estórias dentro e casa – novelas,* by Germano Almeida.
This is a collection of three novels by Germano de Almeida, born in 1945 on Boavista Island, Cape Verde, where he lived until he was 18 years old. He graduated in Law from the University of Lisbon and returned to Cape Verde to work as a lawyer on São Vicente Island. His first works as a writer date back from the 1980s, as he published his first stories under the name of Romualdo Cruz. His first novel was *O testament do Sr. Napomuceno da Silva Araújo*, published in 1989 and followed by *O meu poeta* (1990), *Estórias de dentro de casa* (1996), *A morte do meu poeta* (1998), *As memórias de um espírito* (2001), and *O mar da Lajinha* (2004). Altogether, these works comprise the *Mindelo* cycle. In the writer's work selected for this chapter, home language is applied to assign identity roots to the characters.

(d) Chinese context in Macao: *Cheong-Sam, a Cabaia,* by Deolinda da Conceição.
Cheong-Sam is a short story collection formerly published on *Notícias de Macau*, a newspaper office where Conceição worked since its foundation. In order to show the hybrid nature of her own condition in her writing, Conceição wrote memorable stories that were shaped up by creative tools. She resorted to lexical items and constructions where local employment contexts were uncovered. Her works became widely known long after she died. The work we have selected is dated from 1995 by the Instituto Português do Oriente, with a foreword written by her son and a book flap text by Henrique de Senna Fernandes, also a Macao-born writer, prior to the "devolution" of Macao to Chinese sovereignty. Conceição's condition was to live as an ethnically hybrid person writing in a time when European Portuguese was

highly regarded and yet in a context where the goal was to leave the marks of a social sector that had originally resulted from miscegenation.

To achieve an intersection between those spaces and illustrate the pluricircular movement, we selected lexical examples that indicate the multiple circular dynamics we argue for. We asked three linguists to read the four selected short stories and take note of all lexical items that, in their opinion, required an explanation about etymology although these items were known by them. As language scientists, we expected that, from this exercise, would emerge words that these linguists believed were not of local origin. As we examined their word lists, we selected the items that were noted down in the three lists. The outcome for each work is as follows:

Table 2: Select words.

Literary work	Selected items
[a] Angola	sanzala, alembamento e kamweka
[b] Brazil	dengue, murundu e seresta
[c] Cape Verde	mondrongo, xunguento e landu
[d] Macao	panchão, pagode e chá

The next step was electing two dictionaries in which the selected items appeared as entries followed by notes on etymology. Two dictionaries were chosen – one from Portugal and one from Brazil, both widely published and used in Portuguese speaking countries:

Table 3: Dictionaries.

Country published	Author	Dictionary
Brazil	Antônio Houaiss	*Dicionário Houaiss de Língua Portuguesa*
Portugal	AAVV	*Dicionário Priberam on line*

Our goal was to investigate to what extent the scholars' selection was a sign of perceiving some uncommon items as being worthy of an explanation based on sociolinguistic and sociocultural contacts. Moreover, we aimed to examine the etymologic approach to each entry by the scholars who elaborated them. We selected initially two online dictionaries (Priberam and Houaiss), however, in a second stage, it was necessary to compare these results with those of other more specialized reference materials. (Castro 1978, 1980, 1981, 2002; Hoepner 2002, dentre outros) or historically situated (Dalgado 1893, 1919; Basile s/d; Machado s/d; Silveira Bueno 1968; Cunha 1982; Borba 2004; among others).

We were led to doing so as suggested by Soukhanov's (n.d.)[11] introduction to The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language[12]. The author applied a methodology whereby he consulted speakers of contemporary English and also selected language from current written languages samples in various spaces. Along the same line, we believed that such an approach would enable us to have access to sociolinguistic niches of significant linguistic rooting. We do support the idea that assessing language usage on the grounds of linguist speakers' interactive experience and including narratives that imply polyphony are powerful laboratories where the mindset of system, territory, and landscape times can be assessed.

What motivated us in this study was the fact that it is possible to identify how speakers who are aware of normative information will perceive the language lexicon as something more or less easily understood by their students, which might lead them to providing supportive etymological explanation. We could simply refer to each of these usage items as foreign language items. This would nevertheless reinforce the purist approach according to which a language is regarded from a centered perspective and all its varieties are a colonial extension of the "homogeneous" and "primary" space where the language originally developed. Such an approach does not include multiple historical moves, which leads us to embracing the view that contributions to a language come from several highly dynamic language centers as an effect of pluricircularity.

5 Lexicon pluricircularity

As we analyze the data we gathered, we will discuss how items that were originally shaped in different Portuguese varieties can also be spotted in other contexts and how their origin may at times seem to have been "forgotten". Including an item as an entry word in a dictionary, as already mentioned, is a sign of circularity. Let us then proceed to our data analysis.

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11 If language is a reflection of the ethos of the generation speaking it, then the new entries and meanings [in the dictionary] have much to say about us and our time. (Soukhanov s/d).

12 "The A-Z vocabulary, containing more than 16,000 words and meanings new to this Edition, is a comprehensive, detailed record of the language. Use of citations allowed the editors to identify new words and new meanings, identify levels of usage, and select more than 4,000 quoted illustrations from nearly 2,000 sources for use in exemplifying entry words in printed context. [. . .] Finally, the citations were used to determine the status of variants. For example, 4,000 electronic citations were accrued for the spelling ambiance and about 2,000 were found for the variant ambience. On the basis of this 2:1 ratio the Dictionary gives ambience as an "unequal," or less frequently occurring, variant of the entry word ambiance". (Soukhanov *et al* n.d.)

(a) African context in Angola: *Manana,* by Uanhenga Xitú
In Xitú's dedication, we read the following:

> *Vocês vão ver: este livrário não tem português caro, não. Português do Liceu, não. Do Dr., não. Do funcionário, não. De escritório, não. (p. 15)*

> *[You will see: this book has no fancy Portuguese. I mean, no Portuguese from school. Or from the doctor. Or from the officer. Or from the office. None.]*

This excerpt denotes the writer's awareness of the fact that in Luanda everyday Portuguese is spoken in a different way from that used at school. Here, the school – the Portuguese from school – is identified as the Portuguese prescribed by cultivated speakers from Portugal.

The concurrent use of Bantu-origin lexicon in Portuguese sentences illustrates the identity bias of specifically Angolan Portuguese linguistic items (Marçalo 2020), though these items were included as entry words in both Portuguese language dictionaries we selected.

It is important to point out that in the end of the book Xintú provides a glossary with the translation of 117 words and idioms and 60 sentences. The glossary is referred to as a "short glossary of Kimbundu words and sentences, with a *tentative* translation into Portuguese." The writer further explains that in the case of Umbundu and Fiote words, he adopted the pronunciation only and could not ensure that the spelling was correct (*cf.* p. 173). Sentences from other languages are translated in a reference on the same page they appear. However, the word *alembamento* is not found in the glossary.

As we look up those words in the selected dictionaries, we can find entries for *alembamento, camueca,* and *sanzala.*

> (a.1)
> Você, Verónica, fez só eu apanhar safanão. O seu português, um dia, vou pôr no livrário. Vou dizer mesmo que na terra do outro não faz ainda **alembamento**, sem perguntar bem se o homem da Verónica vai vir mais ou não. (p. 20)

> *[You, Verónica, do only me to get slapped. One day I'll throw your Portuguese on the bookshelves. I'll say that in other people's land there's no alembamento unless you first ask if Verónica's man will come or not.]*

> Angola: Money or assets paid to a fiancée's family by the groom-to-be as he proposes to her. Dowry. *Lembamento.*

> Related words: *lembamento, alembar."alembamento"*, in Dicionário Priberam da Língua Portuguesa [online], 2008–2021, https://dicionario.priberam.org/alembamento [access on 16.JAN.2022].

(a.2)
E o padrinho do casamento apanhou uma "grossura", uma "cardina". Mas uma ***"Kamueka"*** de verdade! Ao ponto de eu e as damas o levarmos em braços para a cama (p.18)

*[And the best man had a "grossura", a "cardina". Oh man, that was a real **"kamueka"**! [He was so drunk] that the ladies and I had to drag him out to bed.]*

The word *kamueka* is included in an alphabetically ordered glossary. It means *the state of being* drunk and is associated with swearing. The word is also found in the dictionary as described below:

Spelling: *camoeca*
(of unknown origin), female noun
1. [informal] State of being drunk, drunkenness, alcoholic intoxication

General synonym: CAMOECA, *camoeca*.
In Dicionário Priberam da Língua Portuguesa [online], 2008–2021, https://dicionario.priberam.org/camueca [access on 16.JAN.2022].

In addition to *camoeca*, the *Dicionário Houaiss* also enters *kamweka* and *camunheca* as synonymous spelling variants and indicates that the word originates from Kimbundu as spoken in central Mozambique. The word is found in both Brazilian and Portuguese dictionaries and is used by a writer from Angola.

(a.3)
Só tem mesmo português d'agente, mesmo, lá do bairro, lá da **sanzala**, lá do quimbo. (p.15).

*[There's only the Portuguese of our folks from the neighborhood, from the **sanzala**, from the quimbo.]*

Sanzala is used as a spelling variant of *senzala*. The word was found as such in 1899 and earlier as *senzala* in 1771 as an Angolan term to refer to a traditional African village (from Kimbundu *san 'zala,* meaning *dwelling*). In São Tomé and Príncipe, it refers to a set of countryside worker dwellings. This provides clear evidence of pluricircularity, at least between Angola, Brazil, Portugal, and São Tomé.

(b) American context in Brazil: *Triste fim de Policarpo Quaresma*, by Lima Barreto The word *seresta* was first found in written texts in 1935 in the Brazilian musical scenario. However, the *Dicionário Houaiss* claims that its origin is unknown. According to Nascentes, it is an "expressive word in which one can spot traces of *serenata [serenade]*" (*apud* Houaiss).

(b.1)
Quando entrou em casa, naquele dia, foi a irmã quem lhe abriu a porta, perguntando:
– Janta já?
– Ainda não. Espere um pouco o Ricardo que vem jantar hoje conosco.

– Policarpo, você precisa tomar juízo. Um homem de idade, com posição, respeitável, como você é, andar metido com esse **seresteiro**, um quase capadócio – não é bonito! (p.2)

[As he got back home on that day, it was his sister who opened the door. She asked,
– You're having dinner now?
– Not now. Let's wait for a while. Ricardo will join us for dinner.
*– Come on, Policarpo, just come to your senses! A grown-up, well respected, established man like you. How is it that you keep fooling around with that **seresteiro [serenade musician]**, quite a rascal? Shame on you!]*

The written word *murundu* was first used in 1889 with the same spelling, although it is said to have derived from Kimbundu *mulundu* (meaning *hill, mountain*). The meanings that are assigned to it nonetheless indicate associations not related to a geographic context:

1.   an amount of anything; a handful; a portion
2.   termite hill
3.   a type of [geographic] micro-relief, typically found in central Brazilian *cerrados* and high plateaus as a small hill or land elevation *usu.* with a rounded peak (of a few meters in diameter and height, sometimes tens of centimeters), commonly comprised by different soil and vegetation from those around it; *aterroada, capãozinho, cocuruto, covoá, covoal, ilha, monchão, morrote, morundu, munduru, murundum, terroada, torroada* [Several biotic and non-biotic processes can be the cause of these small hills.]

This metaphorical sliding provides evidence that the word is in a dynamic process that also occurs in language rooted grammaticalization processes. The source-item enters the system as a geographical description and later grammaticalizes into some sort of quantity marker. It is well known that grammaticalization processes settle down in a language in a slow, gradual fashion (Gonçalves *et al* 2007)

(b.2)
Quaresma fez com a cabeça sinal afirmativo e a preta velha, talvez com grandes saudades do tempo em que era escrava e ama de alguma grande casa, farta e rica, ergueu a cabeça, como para melhor recordar-se, e entoou:
É vem tutu
Por detrás do **murundu**
Pra cumê sinhozinho
Cum bucado de angu. (p.10)

[Quaresma nodded and the old black lady, who was then maybe missing the time when she served as a slave or a maid for a wealthy family in a large house with plenty of food, lifted her head as in an attempt to better recall those good times, and sang:
Come come "tutu"
*From behind the **murundu***

To eat up little master
With a bit of "angu"]

The word *dengue* was first found in a written text in 1836, but its usage had already been spotted in Spanish back in 1732. As regards its etymology, *Dicionário Houaiss* considers it unknown, although Corominas explains that it originates from the language spoken in old Provence. Other researchers will nevertheless associate its stem to Kimbundu.

> *dengue* (1732) squeamish, pretentious behavior; epidemic disease, influenza (of unknown origin; according to Corominas, the word derives from old *Provençal*) voc. Expressive; others claim that the word derives from Kimbundu *ndenge* meaning new-born child, whining, act as a weeper.

> (b.3):
> Quaresma preparou os dedos, afinou a viola, mas não havia na sua execução nem a firmeza, nem o **dengue** com que o mestre fazia a mesma operação. (p.6)

> *[Quaresma warmed up his fingers and tuned up the guitar, but his playing had neither the self-assuredness nor the **dengue** of his master.]*

The unknown, controversial origin of the word – in this case, the likelihood of two possible etymologies – is one of the indexes of lexical circularity. The word is so deeply rooted in the language that it became impossible to trace back its origin, especially because local usage shows different semantics from that used in other co-related cases.

(c) African context in Cape Verde: *Estórias de dentro de casa*, by Germano Almeida Apparently, the writer applied the word *mandrongo* as a derogative reference to men who were born in Portugal and with whom most Cape Verdean ladies would fall in love.

> (c1)
> As pessoas conheceram mais intimamente o casal nesses tempos áureos em que Macedo aca-baria por se afirmar como um dos mais sólidos negociantes de bordo dizem que, se é certo que não se pode afirmar em consciência ter sido D. Rosalina uma santa, nem por isso é justo que seja apresentada como uma desbragada porque esteve longe de ser das piores. É verdade que tinha um fraco especial pelos **mandrongos**, mas qual a cabo-verdiana que não o teve na altura? (p. 25)

> *[People got to know the couple better in those golden times when Macedo thrived as one of the wealthiest merchants in town. While, as they say, we should not praise D. Rosalina as a woman of undisputed reputation, it would not be fair to take her for a person without a shred of common sense. She was far from being so. She did have a crush on the **mandrongos**, but then who didn't?]*

The *Dicionário Houaiss* provides this entry with a different spelling (20th century, *cf* AGC) and classifies it as a masculine noun. The spelling variant *mondongo* can also be found (1647 BPThes1 adit.).

1   *derog*. A person deprived of usual or normal shape, a monster-like person
2   *derog*. Lazy
3   *derog*. Poorly dressed person of awkward appearance; gross
4   *derog*. A person born in Portugal
5   *inf*. Swelling, edema, bulge
6   *inf*. Sebaceous cyst

As we examine the meanings above, we realize that a descriptive item evolves to a more derogative characterization. This process necessarily implies semanticization of an original item that will absorb judgmental traces slowly and gradually. Obviously, this takes some considerable time and shows the contact between people of different ethnic origins due to the nature of their own actions and attitude. As we see it, this is another trace of circularity.

> (c2)
> Com efeito, passado algum tempo sobre o casamento, D. Rosalina começou a reparar que Macedo tinha características que ela qualificava de **xunguentas**. Com frequência saía de casa depois do jantar sob pretexto de que tinha coisas urgentes no escritório, mas ao regressar alta madrugada dirigia-se directamente à casa de banho, que ficava afastada do quarto deles, e tomava um banho completo e amarrotava toda a roupa que tinha vestido e ele mesmo a levava para o cesto de roupa suja. (p. 65)

> *[In fact, not much longer after the wedding D. Rosalina noticed some of Macedo's features which she said were **xunguentas [vicious]**. He would oftentimes go out after dinner to deal with some urgent matter at the office, or so he said. However, no sooner would he get back home than he would rush to the bathroom – which was far from their bedroom – to take a long bath, mess up his dirty clothes and put them all in the laundry basket.]*

In the *Dicionário Houaiss*, *xunguenta* is spelled as *chunga*, a derogative informal Portuguese word of unknown origin and equivalent to *useless, of very low quality.* Despite its unknown origin, however, *Dicionário Houaiss* provides an entry word spelled as *xunga*, of Angolan origin, to denote a malicious woman and whose etymology is likely to be from Kicongo *sunga (malice)*. Since this is also used in Portugal to refer to something of poor quality, we believe that these terms could have stemmed from the same original word. Again, this is an instance that reinforces the circularity process through interpersonal assessment.

> (c3)
> Todos comeram e beberam fartamente enquanto davam vivas aos noivos que, de uma espécie de trono armado para a ocasião, presidiam a todas aquelas festividades. Porém, logo depois

dos brindes e do landu, Ramos decidiu que eram horas de recolher e pediu que levassem a mala da mulher para o carro que os esperava à porta. (p. 49–50)

*[They all ate and drank lavishly while they cheered for the bride and the groom. These, sitting in somewhat of a throne especially set up for that occasion, headed all the revelry and joy. However, soon after the cheers and the **landu**, Ramos made up his mind to go to bed and ordered to take his wife's suitcase to a car waiting outside by the door.]*

Landu refers to an old São Tomé dance in which the couples would say romantic verses as they were challenged to do so. Dictionaries show the word in its variants *lundum* and *lundu*, where B (Brasil), P (Portugal), and STP (São Tomé e Príncipe) are also indicated. As used by the Cape Verdean writer, it is not easily associated to a circularity process – did it move from São Tomé to Cape Verde or was it the other way round? That is why we prefer the term *pluricircularities. Lundu* also refers to several popular songs inspired by African rhythms introduced in Portugal and Brazil in the 17th century (by means of a dance brought by Bantu enslaved people). It is noteworthy that circularity does not imply the usage bring-and-take contact between Portuguese language spaces only, but it can certainly show a writer's own perception of works produced in other spaces. This leads us back to a situation where Henrique de Senna Fernandes once said that he admired Brazilian Guimarães Rosa's style. As a matter of fact, that was a testimonial by a Macao citizen who had earned a Law degree in Coimbra and wrote pieces of literature of a hybrid style, such as the ones we have examined here, talking about his view on a Brazilian book. Pluricircularity clearly shows the various contact and access routes particularly among the Portuguese speaking countries.

(d) Macao Chinese: *Cheong-Sam, a Cabaia*, by Deolinda da Conceição

(d.1)
Cam Mui, ciente do seu destino, tinha-se já habituado a ver passar os dias sempre iguais, monotonamente iguais. Que lhe restava na vida senão esperar o dia em que iria celebrar as suas bodas no outro mundo, para onde tinha partido o noivo?! Vivia isolada, sem outra companhia a não ser a da velhota que lhe tinha alugado um cubículo onde ela passava os dias, trabalhando em **panchões**, para matar o tempo, como dizia. (p. 83)

*[Cam Mui was aware of her fate and had already got used to living her life in a monotonous row of absolutely dreary days. What else could she do in life but wait for the day when she would be celebrating her wedding in the other world, the world her fiancé had gone to? She lived all by herself with no other companion than that of the old lady from whom she had rented that tiny room and where she would spend her days working in **panchões** to kill time, as she would say."]*

The word *panchões* was first found in a written document in 1899 and, according to *Dicionário Houaiss*, is associated with Chinese *pau-tcheong*. This word refers to a local etymology that is "quite unclear, though its meaning is definitely not *gun powder*

wrapping." (*Houaiss online dictionary).* In spite of that, in Macao this term is a masculine noun related to fireworks and refers to Chinese firecrackers set off in festivals like the Lunar New Year. It actually means more than just something that cracks and lights up the sky. The Chinese nurture a New Year symbology where a series of *panchões* can scare away evil spirits to ensure that a successful new year is about to come. This object in the space-time axis serves as grounds to its systemic lexical features (system time), the features derived from social uses (territory time), and the identity characteristics (landscape time). Knowing that it has earned a dictionary entry as an object used for a specific purpose does not yet enable us to reach the times that were yielded in symbolic layers in a particular Portuguese speaking region.

> (d.2)
> Saiu de cabeça baixa a preparar nova desculpa que satisfizesse as perguntas da mãe, que a não poupava com seus queixumes e recriminações. Seguiu em direção a casa mas, como vinha fazendo desde há meses, deteve-se em frente do **pagode**, indecisa se devia entrar ou não. (p. 24)

> *[She left, crestfallen, as she was making up a new excuse to give to her mother, who never spared her from moaning and scolding. She set out to her house just like she had been doing for years but stopped in front of the **pagode [pagoda]** and wondered if she should enter or not."]*

The word *pagoda* was first found in a document in 1516 and originates from Sanskrit, according to *Dicionário Houaiss.* The various meanings assigned to this word include, for example:

1 temple or memorial monument found in India and other Eastern world regions, *usu.* built as a multilevel tower with several roofs *oft.* curved upward. (The word is also used to refer to Moorish mosques and Buddhist poles.)
2 *(1525)* Indian idol, image of an Asian god or saint
3 *(1560)* loud or licentious, revelry, festivity where a *pagode* is played
4 $\boxed{p.ext.}$; $\boxed{B}$ in a broad sense: popular ball
5 *(sXX)* $\boxed{p.ext.}$; $\boxed{\text{MÚS}}$; $\boxed{B}$ samba; *esp. Partido alto* samba variety originated in Rio de Janeiro in the 1970s [New social issues were debated in samba lyrics, as well as new instruments such as *tã-tã, repique de mão, and Brazilian banjo.*]
    5.1 $\boxed{\text{MÚS}}$; $\boxed{B}$ people gathered to play and sing the *pagode* ($\boxed{\text{as in}}$ 5) ‹there will be a *pagode* at Alfredão's›
    5.2 $\boxed{p.met.}$ the place where such gathering occurs

6 $\boxed{B}$; $\boxed{infrm.}$ Something that is done or said to cause laughter about someone or something; mockery; joke
    ‹make p. of someone›
7 $\boxed{p.ext.}$; $\boxed{\text{DNÇ}}$, $\boxed{\text{ETN}}$, $\boxed{\text{MÚS}}$; $\boxed{AL}$ same as [2]coco (meaning *dance*)

8 *(1595)* HIST.NUMS gold coin used in Southern India
Sansk., from Dravidic (Malay. *pagôdi*, Tamil. *pago*(*di*); see *pagod-*

Eight meanings have been associated to the word as in a tracked pathway of seman-
tic sliding that yielded new meanings (semantics), new intentions (pragmatics),
molded and forged into new features with the same spelling, same pronunciation,
and same morphology. Here, "same" is not perceived in the same way as in different
Portuguese speaking spaces. In Brazil, for instance, the word is still quite commonly
used to refer not only to a monument in a public square where events take place,
but also to a musical style associated with samba music and also referring to the
place where one could listen to this sort of music. Portugal, in turn, includes mean-
ings 1 and 3 in the country's current usage. These are examples of pluricircularity
in which the three time categories were required in diversified spaces by merging
their symbology with no need for local speakers to look up their new meaning in
a dictionary. This is the feeling of belonging or otherwise appropriation such as is
commonly found in pluricircularity.

The word *chá* was first read in a document dated from 1565. According to
Dicionário Houaiss, *it* originates from Mandarin dialect *ch'a* as described with the
following explanatory note:

> *ch'a* (Ind.Eng. *cha*, *chaw*, barely used);
> The word has two phonetic equivalents: *ch'a* from the Mandarin dialect, and *te* form Funkien
> dialect. The former was adopted by Japan, Indochina, Portugal, Greece, Russia, and Slavic lan-
> guages, whilst the latter was introduced in Europe by the Dutch (*the*, derived from Malay *tēh*)
> and was adopted by other European nations and Malay-Polynesian languages. *See te(i/o)-; hist.*
> *sources* 1565 *chà*, 1569 *cha,* 1624 *chá*, 1813 *xá*

> (d.3)
> Os estrangeiros eram recebidos com todas as etiquetas da praxe, sendo-lhes oferecido sempre
> **chá** do melhor e em chícaras de porcelana, preciosa do mais alto valor. (p. 35)

> *[Foreigners were welcomed with the usual etiquette. They would be served the best **chá [tea]***
> *in lavish porcelain cups.]*

In all Portuguese speaking regions selected to this chapter, the word *chá* refers to a
hot drink made by infusing herbs into boiling water. Although it was a Portuguese
queen who took to England the habit of drinking tea at five o'clock, some will assign
a noble and distinguished attitude to drinking the "afternoon tea" as a typical
English habit. Others, however, will fit this attitude in a medical frame (taking *mez-
inhas,* as substances used for medical treatment were referred to), whilst others
will move the scene to the Japanese tea ceremony. These framings should find one's
perception on the three time categories as shown herein as a relevant feature while
dealing with pluricircularity.

Conclusion

Most of the usages examined in this chapter are the same as those used by the selected writers from three continents. While lay people will retrieve pragmatic framings that are feasible in their local reality, Portuguese language professors will explain such phenomena as foreign words or idioms. Where could we find the link between what a community consider its own production or foreign production? Certainly not in one sole moment or space. Actually, neither space nor time alone – in their most commonly accepted meanings – can connect what has always been spread throughout the Portuguese language world (as well as in other linguistic worlds). Hence our suggestion to bring this debate to an ecologic field where some key cognitive categories are included, such as persons, objects, spaces, time, and quality (circumstances that originate from and merge in a combination of primitive categories)[13] in a circularity reasoning. This circularity does not lie on transferred lexical items or the presence/absence of such items in lexicography works. As a matter of fact, it is arranged within pragmatic framings and conditions that were locally built, thus causing the need for metaphorical transfer.

Two factors integrate themselves, sometimes as elucidators and sometimes as complicators, in understanding this pluricircular movement that drags locally spoken elements into the dynamics of linguistic usage. The first one is that a vast majority of pluricircular terms is scarcely perceived as something that originally stemmed from outside the Portuguese language. The same applies to the little awareness about what is required by a system so that it includes new elements, or about what a socioculture does in order to make usages natural, or what one's eyes can distinguish in a sociolinguistic landscape. Not paying attention to what is presented to us is a component part of our repetitive, everyday usage. The second one is that widely circulated dictionaries end up having their content incorporated, in a remarkable gradient of similarity, to many but not to all dictionaries produced throughout History[14].

These two factors led us to expand the scope of reference to other works in circulation, both more local and more general, as well as those produced in related

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13 Here we have resumed the grammatical constitutional model for languages, where dynamic development processes imply people in interaction. This occurs in a complexity that enables us to explain one's sociocultural heritage repertoire based on one's multiple sides of personal experiences. This is particularly so in the grammaticalization process, which is intralinguistic, slow, gradual, and largely assisted by a cognitive component as demonstrated by Heine, Claudi, Hünnemeyer (1991) and Gonçalves, Lima-Hernandes, Galvão (2007) in the Portuguese language.

14 To delve deeper into this reality of lexical transfer/incorporation between works throughout the history of the Portuguese language, we recommend reading Hoepner (2002).

languages, such as Spanish, which had intense contacts with Portuguese during the navigation period and even afterwards, especially in South America.

Thus, this chapter provided evidence of the usually unperceived fading of a historical basis as a result of contacts in pluricircular dynamics. One way to demonstrate such dynamics is to access word entries in lexicographic works so that by simply accounting for dictionary entries and checking their respective attested etymology, a dictionary user could find the answers to what was discovered according to a terminology placed within the theoretical framework of the publicizing document. Always synchronic in its nature, ecology will nevertheless still crave for a deeper approach based on everyday habits. If we have no eyes to see, we must admit that we do need a model based on the complexity of multicultural time-space guidelines.

Given the timeline of contacts and effects that remain both locally and circularly, we have suggested an approach based on three categories of time: system time (i.e., lexical features), as we consider contact and its quality; territory time (i.e., social features) and its dynamic nature that implies territorialization in a process such as the one we have suggested and claimed (as in Santos 2004), cited in the previous pages; and landscape time (i.e. cultural, identity features), which always comes to surface as local couplings to rituals, scenes, habits, and attitudes are identified.

Those time layers resulted from merging Landscape Ecology with Theory of Metacommunity concepts and enabled us to approach usage instances in a typical methodology where the sampling basis is neutralized by paired criteria. These, in turn, served as a source from which we could extract contextualized lexical items that were later submitted to a second selection by professionals who work with Portuguese language description/teaching.

Thus, based on the production context of the selected works and the authors' conscious involvement about the cultural hybrid nature of their native land, we contrasted some lexical items previously chosen by linguists. This procedure led us to an interaction between landscape spatial patterns and ecologic processes. The outcome of this operation enabled us to find evidence of metacommunity in action. In other words, while writers selected items which they thought were not part of the Portuguese language in an attempt to express themselves, linguists selected the items to highlight their hazy etymology. Nowadays, these words are acknowledged as being a component part of a pluricentric language that has developed in a varied space and socioculture.

We later verified that those words "pluricirculate" and relate to social and everyday life patterns, which in turn are embedded in the social and sociolinguistic dynamics of each of the regions represented in literary works by hybrid individuals immersed in their own cultures. In spite of that, those words have been entered as

dictionary entries to attest their actual lexical status in the Portuguese language due to circularity.

Bringing such circularity to surface is a political action that (i) challenges existing purist practices that attempt to silence languages and cultures by limiting their production within the colonial borders of culturally trapped geographic communities; and (ii) makes it clear that despite the neocolonial discourse surveillance, the nature of human relationships is cultivated by cross-culturality, which provides languages with new forms and meanings both locally and globally, with all positive (highlighting and assigning high value) and adverse (usage erasing and juxtaposing) consequences.

The identities that individuals and communities assign to themselves are powerful imaginary constructs that consolidate and go through changes as fragment discourses interact with one another along the time. Underlying the basis of those discourses is the lexicon, which becomes less salient as it is repeatedly heard. The feeling of strangeness will eventually fade out insofar as one adheres to what is said and as utterances previously perceived as salient lose their strength throughout the centuries. Dias and Rocha (2010:07) pointed out such a phenomenon in Macao, but this is likewise applicable to other former Portuguese colonies,

> These cultural identities are conceived in territorialities that by far are more imaginary than realistic. They are legitimated on the grounds of unwavering certainties that will sometimes viciously dismiss the other, and often causing sacrifice to some and genocide to others.
> Actually, the cultural tradition that has been collectively or individually embedded in each human being's egoculture is a complex mix of multiple influences more or less remodeled or changed[15].

The fadeout referred to above also occurs in the way we enter words in lexicographic works. While Serafim da Silva Neto (1977)[16] had already pointed out that perceiving different items was already lacking in Portuguese dictionaries, it appears that living together with differences has nowadays swept away the feeling of foreignness and weirdness to a greater extent. And this has paved the way for a richer language with a broader sense of belonging. That is the reason why it is so relevant to debate this issue with tools that are suitable to this approach and from a perspective that will not wipe out human moves within this dynamic process.

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15 Our translation.
16 This had been explored by Silva Neto (1977: 26), in his *Introdução ao estudo da língua portuguesa do Brasil*, as he observed that regional Portuguese glossaries have consistently left out the so-called "Brazilianisms".

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