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**Title!: Sociolinguistic Remarks about Portuguese in France!
construction of a stigmatized sociolect**

1. Characteristics of Portuguese immigration to France

Portuguese immigration is essentially work and family-oriented. Most of the families arrived during the nineteen-sixties and seventies (65,2 % between 1960 and 1974), running away from misery, the dictatorship of Salazar and for some of the men, running away military service in Africa.

At that time it was estimated that approximately one million Portuguese, out of the nine million that made up the population of Portugal, lived abroad, mostly in francophone areas of Europe.

Portuguese immigration in France today covers three generations.

These families come from villages in the North and center of Portugal, from the Porto region. They are in majority a rural population, with little schooling at the time and the language they speak bears regional marks that make it resemble Galician or Spanish.

The Portuguese settled mainly in the Paris region and mainly in certain suburbs in the South and South-East of the capital. But Portuguese speakers represent 4.25 % of the population of "*Ile de France*".

They are concentrated in certain occupations. The women are in the service sector, as cleaning ladies or janitors of buildings where they are put up with their families. The men worked in construction activities (usually in teams with men from the North African countries). At the beginning they were employees and quite a few of them managed to create their own businesses in this same building branch.

Portuguese immigration has long been characterized by activities in voluntary associations, parishes, sport associations, etc. where they reproduce the connections they had in their home towns with neighbors and cousins.

The first weddings took place in Portugal or between Portuguese «!fiancés!» who had met in the home country. Later on and nowadays the tendency -especially among young men- is to choose a Portuguese companion or

the daughter of Portuguese immigrants. Most of the "exolinguistic" marriages take place with people from Spain.

Immigration from Portugal has been constantly decreasing since 1974 : Portugal has itself become, over the last ten years, a country of immigration from Africa and South America.

2. What do we know about the transmission of Portuguese ?

The most recent data come from the Family Survey conducted simultaneously by INED-INSEE at the time of the 1999 population census. The overall picture is the following :

The survey estimated the number of Portuguese speakers (Lusophones) at about **600.000** (six hundred thousand people) in France.

Transmission rate of Portuguese to children Portuguese speakers in France in 1999!: **600,000.**

Roman languages!:

Portuguese :	67,4 %	among which!:	58,7 %	of everyday use
Spanish!:	38,5 %	among which	51 %	of everyday use
Italian!:	27,4 %	among which	45 %	of everyday use

Non Roman Languages

Arabic!:	65,3 %	among which	60,4 %	of everyday use
Turkish !:	86,6 %	among which	84,1 %	of everyday use

Source!: Insee-Ined, Etude de l'Histoire Familiale, recensement de 1999.

The rate of transmission of the language by parents to the children is about 67,4 % on the national level. It can be compared to Arabic transmission which is 65,3% and Spanish transmission which is 38,5 %. It is only slightly higher for mothers (52,7 %) than for fathers (49,6 %). Thus the rate of family transmission of Portuguese is especially high, if one considers that what is dealt with is a very old migration.

3. Language repertoires and characteristics of family communication

Characterization of Portuguese language transmission is synthetized in the following frame!:

Family communication is realized on the language alternation mode!:

- parents use more Portuguese!but women switch more than men,
- children use more French than their parents in their communication with them,
- second generation people mostly use French when talking to each other (even in Portugal).

Parents transmission is helped!:

- by holidays in Portugal,
- portuguese courses (ELCO or associations).

but hindered!:

- by the absence of Portuguese as L2 in French educational system,
- French stereotypes about Portugueses and Portuguese language.

The parental idiolect is made up of!:

- a) An archaic and rural form of Portuguese, the language that they heard during their childhood in the fifties, little affected by the standardization, according to “Lisbonish” characteristics, that took place in Portugal in the second part of the 20th century,
- b) But also of a Portuguese that bears the marks of its prolonged contact with French, particularly on the lexical level,
- c) The parents' competence in French is very variable, probably better among the women than among the men, who usually have a very strong accent, characterized by the fricatives, regularly stigmatized by the French population.

Portuguese spoken by immigrants

On phonetic level!:

- northern pronunciation!: spanish pronunciation of initial /b/ or /v/
- modification of nasals, diphtongs and /r/
- substitution of / / by /s/ (by second generation children)

On lexical level!:

- a) archaisms, like «despois» for «depois» (english!: after).
- b) ruralisms : «sertao» for «frigideira» (fr. poêle à frire),
- c) sociolectal marks of illiteracy, like : «vental» for «avental» (fr. tablier)..

On lexical level too (U. Pereira Santos Bendiha, 1996 quote 720 items)!:

- d) loanwords!: «!pubela!» (fr. poubelle)
- e) interferences!: «!botelha!» (garafa, fr. bouteille)
- f) changes in meanings («!interes!»),

Surveys carried out through interviews as well as recordings trace the profile of bilingual communication in the families. Code-switching takes place on the following pattern: the parents speak Portuguese to their children who answer in French, but, a fluent sort of switching also takes place on the inter and intra-phrastic level. This is a short example of a conversational story! (corpus «!Ribeiro!», 2000, mother speaking with daughters) :

E!: como nao cabia no ascensor MONTOU-me apé, olha / il en a mis partout, et depois là encima naquela escadinha que TOURNA que TOURNA/ euh!: ele era grande, olha / Y'avait partout des épines / alors elle est venue s'excuser!: «!Oui Maria euh!: on a mis partout, bon, heu!: **là vai a Maria outra vez passar o aspirador ontem** // e depois diz ela assim!: «!Ah mais le vôtre!» euh, **pôs assim a mao no naquele** «!mais le vôtre, il est / il est faux!», digo assim «!bah oui je vais pas chaque année acheter un!: un sapin que ça coûte cher!» // diz ela «!moi aussi, j'avais un faux, mais je l'ai jeté/ j'ai été tellement bête / que j'ai jeté même les boules!!!». **Estao aqui estao aqui.**

The children all speak French, being schooled in French schools and they speak French among themselves. Second generation can very rarely be seen as a community in France: there are virtually no Portuguese-speaking "gangs".

They sometimes have access to a more standard form of Portuguese through the ELCO programs (courses in Language and Culture of Origin given by teachers sent to France from Portugal) or thanks to courses in Portuguese offered by associations. However, Portuguese, contrary to other languages like Spanish, German and to a certain degree Italian, is rarely part of the French school curriculum as a foreign language. Consequently, it has not benefited from any institutional recognition or from the written and oral practice that other (minority) languages have in schools.

Some female university students specialize in Portuguese, others choose to specialize in French as a foreign language or in modern languages.

I already mentioned the grand-parents' role in Portugal in refreshing the second generation children's Portuguese language. But what about these children's children ? At the beginning, forty years ago, Portuguese migrants

meant to go back home to retire, in the house they had built with their savings. In fact, such a return does not always take place. Accustomed to city life and certain (especially health) services, the women no longer dream of returning to their childhood village. They especially want - and their husbands do too - to stay near their grand-children, born and bred in France. The to-and-fro way of life thus continues (naturally with certain time differentials) after retirement, between France, where they still have their home, and Portugal. Called upon to look after the grand-children or to take them during vacation time, they also transmit their particular variety of contact language. Thus it is that one can see, among the young bilingual children, as among their parents of the previous generation, a fluctuation in competence in their two languages, according to the time they spend in Portugal.

4. Relations with the home country and space experiences

Generally speaking, we would like to distinguish, as far as the relations to home country are concerned, between five types of immigration to France which I associate with different linguistic behavior patterns!:

- **Integration** concerns those who progressively let go of their parents' language and assimilate into French
- **To-and-fro**: this is typical of those who over the year shuttle back and forth between France and Portugal,
- **Nomads** are usually polyglots because they are connected to the buying and selling of food and technical goods around the Western Mediterranean,
- Finally, the **diaspora** has its place in a very open international network with a very strong symbolic reference to roots.
- **Stand by** concern migrants who are simply waiting for something or somewhere else (refugees, students, US visa seekers).

The Portuguese belong to the first two types. They are very well integrated (one speaks of them as being an «invisible!» migration), and by shuttling back and forth between France and their villages for vacations, they keep in touch with their region or country of origin. They often build large houses there which are visible proof of their having succeeded.

The young children are linguistically "refreshed" by their grand-parents, who speak or spoke a local variety. As they get older, however, they feel **at odds**

with the young Portuguese of their age who speak a contemporary standard variety and whose teenage culture they do not share.

Called "little Frenchies" by the Portuguese, they go on speaking French with their siblings and cousins "from France" and prefer to stick together. This creates, "over there", during the summer vacations, strange little French-speaking pockets in a traditionally monolingual region.

Others prefer to study - namely by taking advantage of the European exchange programs in the universities - to marry, or to settle in Portugal. The linguistic difference I just mentioned may lead to hyper-correct attitudes which only go to show their linguistic insecurity. If, on top of it all, they do not feel legitimate as full-fledged French-speakers, they have a hard time finding their own place. They then become victims of "symbolic violence" or "double binds" that block them all the more that their access to higher education has been faster.

5. Migration bilingualism : A functional and symbolic «!capital!» (to use Bourdieu's terminology) which is difficult to make the most of on the linguistic "market".

As was explained earlier on, this bilingualism among migrants is a contact bilingualism. It is spontaneous, not controlled, not given any value by normative rules such as school code which controls and legitimates the norm only possess by French native speakers. Michèle Koven (2004) emphasizes this point, stigmatizing strong monolingual ideologies that are currently found both in France and Portugal: every single deviation from the norm is stigmatized. Where, ideally, transitional immigration should add some value (French spoken in Portugal and Portuguese spoken in France), the reality is in fact totally different;

- in France, Portuguese migrants are made fun of because of their overuse of the phoneme /sh/ (they are rather nastily called "guèches": apheresis on the parodic pronunciation of "portugues" by Portugueses) and because they are unable to pronounce the French /y/. Their French is thus considered as bad.
- in Portugal, people condemn both their old-fashioned variety of Portuguese mixed with French words and the way they use French in inappropriate circumstances.

These phenomena are deeply felt more or less consciously by migrants' children.

«!(...) I only speak Portuguese with my mother because she does not speak French. And sometimes she even finds it difficult to speak Portuguese with Portuguese people because she has not gone back to Portugal for a long time. She mixes French and Portuguese in the same

sentence. She uses French words with a Portuguese accent. We can understand her, but in Portugal people can't. But what is even worse is that we believe it is Portuguese!!» (J.M).

Parents are always mixing the two languages and they aren't even aware that that's what they are doing. It happens quite often. My parents do it. They aren't even aware that they are mixing the two languages. (Dina, in Fernandes, 2000).

I speak Portuguese: it's true that people immediately guess I am not a native speaker. My wife speaks Portuguese. People can tell that she lived in Portugal and that I never did. In Portugal I am always French. (L. corpus "Darrous", 1999)

You have to draw the line between Portuguese people that are really from Portugal and those you can meet here in France. (Daniel, in Fernandes, 2000).

I get the feeling that a Portuguese immigrant is totally different from the really Portuguese Portuguese. Two cultures co-exist now: the "Portuguese-in-Portugal culture" and the Portuguese immigrants' culture (M.R in Fernandes, 2000.).

They keep making fun of the way we speak; we don't speak Portuguese/ and we arrive here and then we keep mixing French words when speaking. No wonder they called us the "avec" (tr. the "with") / hem... they believe we do it on purpose. (Paula).

When they discover such a lack of awareness of the changes in their own language as opposed to the Portuguese norm (cf. the Portuguese who wonder why they are not understood by waiters) they feel in danger as far as their integrity is concerned: they get "destabilized" because they do not own their language any more.

In the case of Portuguese, we must face the fact that the relation between languages and borders are still very strong in Europe And that monolingual ideology remains firmly in place in both countries. J.A.Fishman and J.J.Gumperz when they talked of "integration" or of "assimilation" took the "host society perspective". But what we are proposing now is a more global perspective, taking into account both societies and the relationship between

them because for the “go-and-fro” migrant and his family, it is his everyday experience.

In that perspective, Portuguese is not seen only as an heritage language only, and the day to day reactions of natives to migrants varieties of language have to be viewed as a socio-semiotic process where accent and loanwords are have to be considered as icons which are signs of a categorization process as “migrants” in both countries.

Conclusion!

Sociolinguistic studies of Portuguese as a language of immigration are fairly abundant and can be found in the extend bibliography given above, especially when compared with those done on other languages spoken in France. The seniority of this emigration allows for a diachronic approach of the phenomenon of transmission, of the changing forms and evolutions in language use, over three generations now. The considerable homogeneity of the dialect spoken and the society created by the groups involved, allow us to come up with general hypotheses about each and all of the internal and external factors affecting the evolution of the language and how it is spoken in France. I have tried to present and explain the link between social considerations, connected to the migratory ways of life, and finer observations of language practices *in situ*. I hope that in so doing, and thanks to the work I have synthetically presented here, it will possibly establish a basis for a solid comparison with other migrant languages spoken in France or in the United States.

Note!:

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