

Brazilian immigrants in the Portuguese education system: National varieties and inclusion strategies

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Immigration in Europe is currently a highly debated and controversial issue. In Portugal, the immigrant population is estimated to be 7.6% - around 30% are Brazilians and 15% come from other Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa (Pordata 2023). These numbers show that nearly 50% of foreigners living in Portugal legally are citizens of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), an international association of Lusophone countries which contributes to strengthening the importance of Portuguese worldwide and as a pluricentric Language. Additionally, its citizens now benefit from simpler visa requirements to live in Portugal (see Ministry of Foreign Affairs n.d.).

CPLP immigrants in Portugal are excluded from government-funded courses of Portuguese language and culture to immigrants, namely the *Portuguese Host Language* (Alto Comissariado para as Migrações n.d.) and the *Portuguese as a non-native language* (Direção-Geral da Educação 2023). Although we may assume this exclusion is reasonable, the reality proves to be quite the contrary. Portuguese is indeed the official language of Portugal, Brazil, and 7 more countries. However, Portuguese newspapers have narrated the disadvantages faced by these immigrants. On top of having to deal with linguistic and racial prejudice, those at school and higher-level education may be marked lower for speaking “Brazilian” or being “in need of learning to write correctly”, in both internal and external evaluation exams, such as the final Secondary Level “National Exam” (see Agência Lusa 2019, and Henriques 2022).

This study aims to introduce all actors involved in the inclusion of Brazilian citizens in the Portuguese education system: the Directorate-General for Education (Direção-Geral da Educação 2023), the recently founded Agency for integration, migration, and asylum (Agência para a Integração, Migrações e Asilo 2023), and the Institute for Educational Assessment (Instituto de Avaliação Educativa 2021). Yet, the latter has declared that accepting foreign varieties at the National Exam would compromise their confidentiality and standardization protocols. Therefore, this research also mentions the strategies available to Brazilian students to compensate for the lack of governmental support for learning the differences between Brazilian and European Portuguese at all linguistic levels, such as private courses or tutoring and comparative linguistics studies. The former may include reading comprehension and grammar lectures; the latter, despite being mostly targeted to academic researchers instead of school students, can be adapted as a self-study method, so students do not have to depend on official initiatives.

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