

Making and Masking Difference: Multiculturalism and Sociolinguistic Tensions in Toronto's Portuguese-Canadian Market

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From marginalisation to markets

The starting point of this Special Issue on Portuguese-Canadian immigrant descendants in Canada and Portugal is the argument that the Portuguese-Canadian community “continues to be largely marginal to the mainstream of Canadian life in economic, educational, political and cultural terms” despite nearly 60 years of official immigration and more than 400,000 people officially counted.¹ The starting point of this paper, in turn, is the argument that Toronto's Portuguese-Canadian “community,” the largest in the country, is not a homogeneous unit and that, despite internal heterogeneity in linguistic, cultural and generational terms, it has masked important processes of marginalisation for nearly 60 years. Firstly, we find the marginalisation of most Azoreans and their descendants within the mainstream Portuguese-Canadian community and its institutions of power. Secondly, we observe the marginalisation of most second-generation Portuguese-Canadian youth from ethnicised spaces that reproduce traditional and monolithic constructions of “portugueseness” (or ways of being and speaking Portuguese).

More broadly, this paper challenges the normalised view that immigrant communities are natural social groupings or depoliticised transplantations of distinct ethnolinguistic units from their “homeland.” Like language and identity, immigrant communities are carefully constructed social projects structured by people with multiple positionings who compete over un-

¹See the introduction to this Special Issue and the call for papers for the October 2011 Symposium entitled “Identity, Civic Engagement, Multiculturalism and Transnationalism: Portuguese-Canadian Immigrant Descendants in Canada,” held at York University (<http://pi.library.yorku.ca/dspace/handle/10315/10042>, accessed May 12, 2012). Statistics Canada, “Citizenship, Immigration, Birthplace, Generation Status, Ethnic Origin, Visible Minorities, and Aboriginal Peoples” (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2006).

equally distributed resources. The focus here is on Toronto's Portuguese–Canadian community and the ways that ideologies of language, class, nationalism, diaspora and multiculturalism have shaped its formation and the identities of its Canadian-born generations. Canada's multiculturalist policy legitimised and funded the creation of ethnic institutions (like clubs, associations and media) and encouraged the development of homogenised ethnolinguistic communities, arguably as a means of managing and controlling difference.²

These community spaces became contested terrains where a small number of people had to define a group identity, or, in this case, what counts as “Portuguese.” At stake are important resources (jobs, services, social status) that are organised into markets that mask internal divisions and heterogeneity in order to appear “united” and “organised” in the eyes of the de-ethnified Canadian mainstream. Through a critical and ethnographic sociolinguistic analysis,³ this paper examines which forms of Portuguese language and identity dominate the market in Toronto, why, and with what consequences for whom. In contrast to “community”, the conceptualisation of “market” borrows from the work of Weber and Bourdieu, among others, who see it as a social arena where individuals struggle to compete for desirable resources (symbolic and material).⁴ The ethnographic data behind this paper reveals a Portuguese–Canadian market divided between a minority of Mainland Portuguese, whose standard language variety and dominant cultural habitus afford them positions of power, and a majority of Azorean Portuguese, whose ways of being and speaking Portuguese are delegitimised. The inheritors of this market, the second and third generations, navigate discursive spaces that largely remain monolingually Portuguese, traditionalist and nationalist, and that are filled with contradictions that marginalise those without the “right” linguistic or cultural capital. The lived experiences of three Portuguese–Canadian youth will be used to highlight (un)successful negotiations of language, identity and difference.

²Christopher McAll, *Class, Ethnicity, and Social Inequality* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).

³Monica Heller, *Éléments d'une sociolinguistique critique* (Paris: Didier, 2002); Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1991).

⁴Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, in Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, eds., transl. Ephraim Fischhoff (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

If the aim of this Special Issue, and the larger research project of which it is a part, is to better understand and ensure a greater inclusion of Portuguese–Canadians and Luso-descendants in both Canadian and Portuguese societies, then the aim of this paper is to better understand and consider a greater inclusion of Portuguese–Canadians within Toronto’s Portuguese–Canadian community by analyzing the multiple, complex and constrained processes of identity negotiations through a critical sociolinguistic lens.

Framing Toronto’s Portuguese–Canadian community as a market, where certain people are in positions of power, and where certain ways of speaking and being earn a person more or less symbolic and material capital, makes the following research questions more salient: who gets to define what counts as a more or less valued sociolinguistic performance of portugueseness? In what contexts? And with what consequences for whom? Throughout this paper, I argue that ideologies of language, nationalism and multiculturalism play a key role in making and masking difference and in structuring the market so that some people are included and others are excluded.

After presenting the theoretical framework that underpins my research, this paper will deconstruct and problematise the structure of Toronto’s Portuguese market, and how Canadian multiculturalism and Portuguese diasporic nationalism have helped reproduce internal group divisions and promote essentialised views of portugueseness. For example, in the Canadian mainstream consciousness it is commonly believed that Portuguese people are all more or less the same, a view that is reinforced by Portuguese nationalist discourses which claim that “*somos todos portugueses!*” But is this really the case? There is also a common idea that all second-generation youth want to (or should want to) maintain and defend the Portuguese language and identity without questioning why or why not. The second half of the paper presents three cases of how some second-generation Portuguese–Canadian youth are included and excluded from the dominant discourses and spaces of portugueseness in Toronto.

Critical, ethnographic sociolinguistics

The theoretical framework that informs this paper is based on critical, ethnographic and post-structuralist sociolinguistics which looks beyond the lin-

guistic system, to the social system and social order.⁵ In this light, language and identity are seen as discursive products of social interaction and situated performances of meaning-making. Such performances are not fixed or permanent but are socially constructed, multiple and shifting. They are also constrained by unequally defined symbolic and material boundaries under specific political, economic and historical conditions.

In this regard, interactions occur in situated social and linguistic markets where legitimate language is a form of symbolic and material capital and an instrument of power in the struggle for who gets defined as a legitimate speaker and as a social actor who can control the production and distribution of resources. Since this distribution is unequal it can limit a person's actions, resulting in social inequality and structuration.⁶ A productive tension emerges between structure and agency and it is captured by Bourdieu's notion of habitus where a person's internalised and socially constructed ways of being in the world can constrain her capacity for agency. A person's habitus is both structured, by past social interactions, and structuring, because it influences current actions.⁷

A person's sociolinguistic habitus and the ways in which a person speaks and acts do not, therefore, start from scratch in every interaction, nor are they always completely open to redefinition. These sociolinguistic performances have real and observable consequences for how a person positions herself and is positioned by others. To speak or act outside the structured social order is almost impossible because all social practices are grounded in specific power-laden histories that continue to be socially reproduced. At the same time, speaking or acting against the structure as an act of resistance is possible and does create a discursive space in which to contest the social order. Determining the legitimacy of naturalised ways of speaking and acting

⁵Pierre Bourdieu, "The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges," *Social sciences information* 16 (6) (1977): 645-68; Pierre Bourdieu, *Ce que parler veut dire: L'économie des échanges linguistiques* (Paris: Fayard, 1982); Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); John J. Gumperz, *Discourse Strategies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Heller, *Éléments*; Monica Heller, ed., *Bilingualism: A Social Approach* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007); Joan Pujolar, "Youth, Language and Identity," *Noves SL* (Winter 2008): 1-11.

⁶Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*.

⁷Loïc Wacquant, "Habitus," in Jens Beckert and Milan Zafirovski, eds., *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology* (London: Routledge, 2005): 315-319.

depends on the distribution of material and symbolic resources, which favours some social groups over others as Heller and Martin-Jones argue below:

By exercising control over the value of linguistic resources ... groups simultaneously regulate access to other resources (such as knowledge, prestige, or material goods) and, at the same time, legitimate the social order that permits them to do so by masking (that is naturalizing) their ability to do so.⁸

The research methodology that supports this paper is informed by the framework of critical ethnography that I used in a larger sociolinguistic fieldwork project in Toronto from 2005-2007 in order to explore the role of language and language ideologies in the multiple and complex constructions of identity.⁹ Since ideological discourses and social practices (like language and identity) have real consequences in people's life, in terms of their access to certain spaces and to certain resources, a reflexive, qualitative and ethnographic methodology can help a researcher to hear, observe and deconstruct how these processes unfold over time and space. Through the use of semi-structured, ethnographic interviews I was able to hear, in the participants' own words, the complexity and the contradictions of their lived sociolinguistic experiences and to allow the participants to raise topics relevant to them which I might otherwise have ignored. Of course, a full understanding of the processes and consequences of social structuration required me to not only ask those involved how they perceive their social action (which is their account of an experience), but also to try and see how they act in specific situations. This is where ethical participatory observation becomes an essential research method. It allows the researcher to observe how individuals negotiate their way through the tangled web of social reality and social boundaries. Prolonged participation helped me observe more than what was immediately visible in given interactions.

⁸Monica Heller and Marilyn Martin-Jones, eds., *Voices of Authority: Education and Linguistic Difference* (Westport: Ablex, 2001), 2-3.

⁹Emanuel da Silva, "Sociolinguistic (Re)constructions of Diaspora Portuguese-ness: Portuguese-Canadian Youth in Toronto," Ph.D. Thesis, University of Toronto (2011); Heller, *Éléments d'une sociolinguistique critique*; Jennifer Mason, *Qualitative Researching* (London: Sage Publications, 2002); Alessandro Duranti, *Linguistic Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Over the course of my fieldwork, I interviewed 47 Portuguese–Canadian participants (who either responded to my public research flyer or whom I contacted after observing them in “Portuguese” spaces), six of whom, in their early twenties, agreed to partake in a deep ethnography granting me access to interactions with their family members, friends and co-workers. Interviews were digitally recorded, with the consent of those present, and later transcribed by myself. In addition, I carried out nearly one hundred participant observations in different public spaces where portugueseness was discursively constructed (e.g. club/association activities, conferences, lectures, festivals, parades, exhibits and rallies) and I took photographs, wrote fieldnotes and, on 21 occasions, also recorded speeches and interactions available in the public domain. Hundreds of pages worth of relevant textual material were also collected from publicly accessible Portuguese-language community newspapers, magazines, flyers, posters and reports. All the data was thematically and comparatively coded by myself, and analysed through critical discourse analysis and a critical materialist theory which considers the socio-historical conditions that structure social interactions to deconstruct the overlapping layers of micro-level individual interactions and the macro-level of dominant social and linguistic ideologies.¹⁰ The scope of this paper is much more limited than my original research, and so it will contextualise the experiences of three participants providing insight into sociolinguistic tensions by drawing from some of their recorded interviews and public interactions.

Managing difference and multiculturalism

Debates about language are also intimately tied to performances of identity and to homogenising nationalist ideologies which often equate one nation, with one language and one people.¹¹ This reductionist view persists in common-sense discourse despite the complex reality of an increasingly mobile, diverse and globalised economic world. For a small country like Portugal, language remains a fundamental part of its identity. Since the fall of its colo-

¹⁰Bourdieu, “The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges;” Heller, *Éléments d’une sociolinguistique critique*; Monica Heller, *Paths to Post-nationalism: A Critical Ethnography of Language and Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Pujolar, “Youth, Language and Identity.”

¹¹Jan Blommaert, ed., *Language Ideological Debates* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1999).

nial Empire, the Portuguese language and diasporic communities have been positioned as the most dominant elements of the country's transnationalist narrative.¹²

In Canada's nationalist narrative, especially outside of Québec, one of the most dominant elements is the official policy of multiculturalism, which was introduced in 1971 in an effort to deal with the tensions of trying to maintain Canada's colonial bicultural framework (in conjunction with English and French bilingualism) in the face of increased ethnolinguistic diversity. The Canadian economy has also played a role in managing and reproducing ethnolinguistic difference by controlling who can enter the country, when and with what access to which jobs.¹³ The socio-economic stratification of ethnic and class difference gained a culturally institutionalised dimension through the state's multiculturalist policy. This policy provided the symbolic and material conditions for the emergence of structured forms of homogenised and bounded ethnolinguistic difference through the establishment of ethnic associations, media and festivals, especially in the early 1970s. The Canadian state now had a way to distribute limited resources along marked ethnolinguistic (and working-class) lines, where ethnic groups had to be clearly defined and set aside internal heterogeneity and divisions in order to portray a cohesive and disciplined interlocutor with the state. Debates over who could best represent an ethnolinguistic community vaulted specific individuals and groups into positions of power creating an "ethnic elite."¹⁴ Thus, by legitimising fake uniformity, Canada's multiculturalist policy often ignores and can therefore reproduce

¹²Bela Feldman-Bianco, "Multiple Layers of Time and Space: The Construction of Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism among Portuguese Immigrants," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 645 (1) (1992): 145-174.

¹³Marinho Antunes, *A emigração portuguesa desde 1950* (Lisbon: Gabinete de Investigações Sociais, 1973); Wenona Giles, *Portuguese Women in Toronto: Gender, Immigration and Nationalism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); Heller, *Paths to Post-nationalism*; McAll, *Class, Ethnicity, and Social Inequality*; John Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965).

¹⁴Neil Bissoondath, *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada* (Toronto: Penguin, 1994); Caroline Brettell, "Ethnicity and Entrepreneurs: Portuguese Immigrants in a Canadian City," in George L. Hicks and Philip E. Leis, eds., *Ethnic Encounters: Identities and Contexts* (North Scituate, MA.: Duxbury Press, 1977), 169-180; Giles, *Portuguese women in Toronto*.

internal group divisions and inequality despite being veiled in a discourse celebrating cultural diversity.

In building Canada's multicultural "mosaic," the most important internal division that is glossed over within the category of "Portuguese" is a regional one: between Mainland Portugal and the Autonomous Region of the Azores.¹⁵ The history between the two has been difficult because for centuries Azoreans were not only physically isolated (the nine islands extend for 600 km and are 1500 km west of Lisbon), but they were also politically marginalised, and economically exploited by the Portuguese national (*i.e.* Mainland) government.¹⁶ Azoreans have often been perceived as second-class citizens and this symbolic domination hinges in part on stigmatising ideologies of language and class that equate rurality and a phonetically marked variety of Portuguese (commonly referred to as "Azorean Portuguese" or "*Açoriano*") as being "backwards" and "unintelligible" compared to the Mainland standard and which, in turn, labels Azoreans as "slow" or "stupid."¹⁷ Over time,

¹⁵The Autonomous Region of Madeira is glossed over entirely because the number of Madeirans in Canada is very small in relation to the number of Mainlanders and Azoreans. To be fair, I have never seen an exact number of Madeirans given, only unreferenced statements such as this one from Domingos Marques "65 per cent of the immigrants came from the Azores islands with a small percentage from Madeira and the rest from mainland Portugal" in an article entitled "Here to Stay," *Toronto Star* (Toronto, 10 September 1992, G1). For more general information on this topic see also F. G. Cassola Ribeiro, *Emigração Portuguesa: Algumas características dominantes dos movimentos no período de 1950 a 1984* (Porto: Secretaria de Estado das Comunidades Portuguesas, Centro de Estudos, 1986); or Grace Anderson and David Higgs, *A future to Inherit: The Portuguese Communities of Canada* (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1976).

¹⁶Mariano Teixeira Alves, *The Creation of the University of the Azores: A Policy Study* (Ribeira Grande: M.T. Alves, 2000); Francis W. Chapin, *Tides of Migration: A Study of Migration Decision-making and Social Progress in São Miguel, Azores* (New York: AMS Press, 1989); Susana Goulart Costa, *Açores: Nove ilhas, uma história/Azores: Nine Islands, One History* (Berkeley: Institute of Governmental Studies Press, University of California, 2008).

¹⁷Da Silva, "Sociolinguistic (Re)constructions of Diaspora Portugueseness;" Manuel Armando Oliveira and Carlos Teixeira, *Jovens Portugueses e Luso-Descendentes No Canadá* (Oeiras: Celta Editora, 2004); Manuel Armando Oliveira, *Myth and Reality in Azorean Emigration* (Lisbon: Universidade Aberta, 1996); Manuel Pinto de Sousa, *Mapa de Portugal insular e império colonial português* (Porto: Livraria Escolar Progredior, 1934). Up until the latter part of the 20th century, there were very few references made to the Azores in the Portuguese media and especially in history textbooks, which were heavily censored by the Estado Novo. As a result, the Azores have been largely excluded from the historical, nation-building narratives commonly taught to children of Portuguese descent (outside of the Azores). According to Oliveira and Teixeira, those textbooks sometimes presented the islands along-

these stereotypes became entrenched into Portuguese popular culture and it was only through emigration that Azoreans and Mainlanders really met and lived in the same spaces, thereby confronting these naturalised ideologies. From the fifteenth century to the latter part of the twentieth century, there was little contact between average working-class Azoreans and Mainlanders in Portugal, but in Canada, for example, the two groups were brought together.

(Un)masking difference in Toronto's Portuguese market

In 1953 the first legally sanctioned wave of Portuguese migrants arrived as Canada's historically discriminatory immigration laws were slightly loosened (to accept Southern or darker-skinned Europeans) in order to meet the growing demands of capitalism with imported working-class labourers.¹⁸ Mostly men, the Portuguese came primarily from rural, undereducated parts of the Azores, Mainland Portugal and, to a much smaller extent, Madeira. Since then, the Portuguese government estimates that the total number of Portuguese in Canada is approximately 500,000, with some 200,000 in the city of Toronto alone.¹⁹ In 2006, the Canadian census officially counted 410,850 total Portuguese ethnic origin responses, with just less than half of them (188,110) in Canada's largest city. Nearly 70% of Toronto's Portuguese market is of Azorean descent, leaving those of Mainland Portuguese descent with approximately 30% of the market share.²⁰ Given this numeric advantage, one might expect to find Azoreans in positions of power, but instead they are largely marginalised.

side the other Portuguese colonies or "overseas possessions," which, they argue, reinforced stereotypes of Azoreans being somehow inferior by racially depicting the islands as a "land of black people" (*"terra de pretos"*). In fact, Oliveira found that many Mainlanders in Toronto, who had never met an islander before emigrating, thought that Azoreans were black, like many Cape-Verdeans, Angolans or Mozambicans.

¹⁸Anderson and Higgs, *A Future to Inherit*; Giles, *Portuguese Women in Toronto*; Daniel Stoffman, *Who Gets In: What's Wrong with Canada's Immigration Program and How to Fix It* (Toronto: Macfarlane, Walter & Ross, 2002).

¹⁹Carlos Teixeira and Victor M. P. da Rosa, eds., *The Portuguese in Canada: Diasporic Challenges and Adjustment*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

²⁰Carlos Teixeira and Victor M. P. da Rosa, eds., *The Portuguese in Canada: From the Sea to the City*, 1st ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

In the early structuration of Toronto's Portuguese market, during the 1950s and 60s, it appears that a small group of middle-class Mainlander men assumed the earliest positions as "community leaders" (*i.e.* ethnic entrepreneurs, presidents of cultural associations, language teachers, politicians). In so doing, they were able to control the dominant discourse of portugueseness and define what counts as good "Portuguese." This centred on Mainland Portugal as the legitimate and single source of Portuguese history, culture and language.²¹

Officially recognising azoreanness as different from standard portugueseness would have complicated Portuguese national ideology (despite the eventual recognition of Azorean autonomy in 1976) and it would not have fit Canada's multicultural mosaic. Thus, in order to produce a unified image of "the Portuguese," internal divisions were essentialised. Decades later, Azorean-Canadians, who were not among the early ethnic elite, still find themselves largely underrepresented in Toronto's dominant Portuguese spaces.²²

This underrepresentation is unmistakably visible and audible in Toronto's Portuguese language classes and community schools—sites that are crucial to social and linguistic reproduction—but where only about 5% of students are of Azorean descent.²³ Not only are varieties of Azorean Portuguese not presented in the classrooms, or in positions of Portuguese power, but even the history of the Azores is largely excluded from the dominant historical narrative that gets constructed for and consumed by the younger generations. Subsequently, this devaluing of the historic and contemporary lived experiences of the majority of Portuguese-Canadians—all in the name of reproducing Portuguese nationalism abroad and the symbolic order imposed by a local elite—suggests that Azorean culture, identity and ways of speaking are somehow deviant. This has a negative impact on the social cohesion of the ethnic group, and even among the Canadian-born second and third generations in Toronto many of whom internalise old ideologies.²⁴

²¹Da Silva, "Sociolinguistic (Re)constructions of Diaspora Portugueseness."

²²Since the early 2000s, investments by the Regional Government of the Azores towards the Azorean diaspora are mobilising a postnational identity and creating an institutionalised structure that is worth exploring further.

²³Oliveira and Teixeira, *Jovens portugueses e luso-descendentes*.

²⁴My fieldwork supports the findings of Oliveira and Teixeira, *Jovens portugueses e luso-*

Consequently, my fieldwork revealed that many Azorean descendants organise themselves separately and do not participate in the dominant spaces of Toronto's Portuguese market. Whether they are excluded, marginalised, resisting or choosing not to be present, the social and linguistic tensions result in their absence. Yet, this tension rarely results in public contestation. Instead, many Azoreans speak with their feet or through their silence in relation to the dominant discourses (of Mainland portugueseness). For instance, one of the ways that many Azorean descendants in Toronto appear to be organising themselves separately is by investing in English rather than Portuguese (*i.e.* speaking English at home and insisting that their children are immersed in it). This decision is roundly criticised by the ethnic community's elite (traditionally from the Mainland) which relies heavily on the reproduction of the Portuguese-speaking ethno-linguistic market, and those who do not pass that language onto their children are chastised by the local elite for their "poor" parenting skills, and for abandoning the nationalist/linguistic cause (celebrated by Portuguese language schools, media and associations, by diasporic Portuguese political institutions and by Canadian supporters of "heritage language" programs²⁵).

The Canadian-born second generation struggles to navigate discursive spaces that remain monolingually Portuguese, that promote antiquated and fixed images of Portuguese history and culture, that romanticise working-class, Catholic, folklorised, colonial and paternalistic traditions, and that try to instil a sense of nostalgia (*saudade*) and a desire to return to a land and time their parents and family left behind. Since most second-generation Portuguese-Canadians in Toronto lack the linguistic and cultural capital to fully participate in traditional Portuguese spaces, they generally choose not to publicly invest in their portugueseness (unless they participate in folklore

descendentes, in suggesting that most Azorean-Canadians are very aware of the fact that they differ from the Mainland norm, and this often leads to their internalisation of feelings of "self-worthlessness," pathology and the so-called "inferiority complex" especially in traditional cultural settings where Portuguese is spoken.

²⁵In many Ontario schools, foreign language instruction is part of the regular curriculum in what was originally known as the Heritage Language Program in the 1970s and then the International Language Program in the 1990s. For more information see Rena Helms-Park, "Two Decades of Heritage Language Education," in Carlos Teixeira and Victor M. P. da Rosa, eds., *The Portuguese in Canada: From the Sea to the City*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 127-144.

dancing or soccer celebrations where one need not necessarily speak Portuguese). Those who do participate have enough sociolinguistic capital that allows them to position themselves favourably in the market. In the following section, the focus shifts to the inheritors of this market and their voices and experiences in order to explore how they negotiate the dominant sociolinguistic discourses that constrain their public performances of Portuguese-ness.

Market investors or not?

Of the 47 people with whom I conducted semi-structured interviews as part of my qualitative and ethnographic fieldwork, I chose to situate the experiences of three second-generation youth that can shed light onto the complexity of the sociolinguistic tensions within Toronto's Portuguese market. The first of these young Portuguese-Canadians is Julia.²⁶ She is a university student, in her early 20s, of Mainland Portuguese descent, born in Toronto and described by her friends as being "sooooo Portuguese!" She grew up in a Portuguese-speaking home and now speaks the language fluently and correctly, she also studied it at a community language school and at university. Julia participates actively in cultural associations, her father runs a business that serves the Portuguese community and nearly every summer her entire family vacations in (Mainland) Portugal, where her parents often talk about returning after retirement. In short, Julia's performances of Portugueseness are almost without reproach because she is directly in line with the dominant discourse.

Based on her experiences with Portuguese-language instruction, Julia was ideally positioned to help me understand why there appear to be so few Azorean descendants enrolled in language classes offered by community institutions. In the following excerpt, Julia and her Portuguese teacher, a Mainlander as well, are surprised by their absence, but argue that it is a matter of personal choice and pride, or lack thereof.

J: It was surprising and actually [my Portuguese teacher] made a comment about how she had been teaching for 20 years and she might've had maybe one or two [Azorean descendants]. And we actually discussed how, um, the Por-

²⁶In order to maintain a certain level of anonymity, pseudonyms are used and identifying characteristics (such as age and employment) are generalised.

tuguese from the Mainland seem a lot more pro-u-d (rising intonation, pause) in a sense? To, to speak their language in public or at home or encourage, um, their children to keep the language alive. ... Like maybe a Mainland person would be, um, “you know, our language is beautiful it’s very important, you should learn it, ‘cuz it is part of who you are” ... And maybe it’s because of the accent? (rising intonation) I’m not sure (nervous laugh), um, that they (pause) [Azoreans] hide it?

The cautious hesitance and nervousness with which Julia broaches this sensitive topic suggests that the question of internal regional and linguistic divisions is still very taboo. That Mainlanders are more associated with the language and identify with it more proudly than Azoreans is likely the result of the fact that, historically, they embody the standard more closely than Azoreans. Julia’s voicing of the dominant discourse, in the excerpt above, reproduces the most common arguments used to convince Portuguese descendants to speak Portuguese and it illustrates how the discourse naturalises the legitimacy of Mainland Portuguese as the national standard, glossing over internal linguistic heterogeneity. The stigmatised variety of Portuguese spoken by many Azoreans—which is considered an “accent” that is not “beautiful” or “very important”—likely leads them to not speak it at home (and reduce the transmission of delegitimised linguistic capital) or to speak it publicly (and reduce the chances of suffering linguistic discrimination). Furthermore, the ethnolinguistic and genetic ideological argument that the “beautiful” language is “part of who you are” delegitimises Azoreans because, although the Portuguese language is also part of who they are, it is not the “right” part. It also dehumanises them to an extent for somehow defying nature and who they really are.²⁷ This delegitimation takes on various forms including stereotyping, mocking jokes and imitations, as Julia can attest in the excerpt below.

J: There’s a lot of jokes ‘n stereotypes too right? That it’s it’s kind of a shame ‘cuz we’re all the same, (pause) in a sense ... Like my friend actually impersonates (rising intonation), um, (laugh) Azoreans, “*Eh corisco!* Speak real Portuguese!” ... But it’s just kinda like (laugh) well, they still *are* Portuguese and and I think that makes them feel even more like marginalised, and not wanna maybe associate with the Mainlanders.

²⁷Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, translated by Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 1970).

The various forms of subtle and blatant discrimination against Azorean descendants, and against the way that many of them speak Portuguese, results in their marginalisation and exclusion from Portuguese spaces that are often controlled by Mainlanders.²⁸ Julia regrets this practice because it damages the supposed unity of the “community.” She wants to believe that Azoreans “still are Portuguese” or that they are the “same” as Mainlanders, but she also realises that they are not (“we’re all the same, in a sense”). Thus, the idealised nationalistic homogeneity has its limits.

Boundary-making processes

The second young Portuguese–Canadian I chose to profile is a young woman of Azorean descent named Maggie. To a certain degree, Maggie is the opposite of Julia. Also in her early twenties, Maggie’s parents, born on the Azorean island of São Miguel, were never really involved in traditional Portuguese spaces in Toronto, except for the Church (which is one of the few cultural places where Azoreans assume positions of power), and Maggie speaks very little Portuguese inside or outside of the home. For a very brief moment, Maggie was enrolled in a Portuguese class at her elementary school and, as we will hear below, it was an experience that marked her for life.

M: My dislike for the Portuguese language came from [her Portuguese teacher] he was from the Mainland, and he had this open disdain for kids from the Azores, which was stupid ‘cuz my school was like 90% Azorean! ... So he would tell us “You’re speaking wrong! You tell your parents they’re teaching you wrong!” ... He was like a dictator. If you weren’t listening ... he’d like literally grab you by the ear and say “*Castigo!* [punishment]” ... so how are you supposed to love that? You don’t! You’re terrified, and when you’re young ... you never forget it. So for a really long time I thought “Screw this!” like, “Forget Portuguese! Why do I want to learn it?”

²⁸My fieldwork and literature review suggest that the overwhelming majority of (European) Portuguese language teachers are of Mainland Portuguese descent. See also Jim Cummins and José Lopes, *The Effectiveness of Activity-based Teaching Strategies in Portuguese Heritage Language Classes* (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1994), and Helms-Park, “Two Decades of Heritage Language Education”. Still, it is unclear whether official statistics on the regional origin of Portuguese teachers exist; none were available at the time of publication.

Maggie's experience unmasks the ideology of linguistic homogeneity within Toronto's Portuguese market and reveals the internal boundary making process that separates Azoreans from Mainlanders. This teacher's blatant abuse of power and his linguistic antagonism fuel the discrimination suffered by many children and parents of Azorean descent who do not meet the prescribed norm of legitimate (Mainland) Portuguese. As a result, it is no surprise that Maggie is not comfortable speaking Portuguese and that she never learned to speak it well.

Maggie's trajectory within Toronto's Portuguese market is a particularly interesting example of agency and structure because even though as a teenager she was someone who did not publicly identify herself as Portuguese (she found the community to be too conservative, traditional and paternalistic), she did not completely turn her back on it either. Later on, for example, while attending university in the area, she became involved in a Portuguese student club. She joined the club because it succeeded in modernising and diversifying Portuguese culture by making it appealing and empowering to the younger generations. She even went on to become the president and under Maggie's leadership the club fought to promote education, equity, inclusiveness and civic participation in the community without insisting heavily on Portuguese culture and language. This sociolinguistic move made it difficult for her to interact directly with the dominant institutions of the local Portuguese market (*i.e.* ethnic media, certain businesses and cultural and political organisations). Since Maggie spoke a stigmatised Portuguese, she refused to engage with the local ethnic media because they almost always insist on having young people speak Portuguese in order to (re)produce a false perception of language maintenance and to reinforce their market which remains monolingually Portuguese.

When the Portuguese student club organised a public conference, in English, to address issues of integration facing the Portuguese in Canada, the local ethnic media was there to cover the event. The Portuguese reporter (a Mainlander himself) approached the club's vice-president, Sarah (of Azorean descent), and she asked to be interviewed in English because she felt more comfortable. The reporter agreed and Sarah thought she had successfully challenged the dominant discourse of portugueseness. But just before the camera started rolling, the reporter ignored Sarah's request and pressured her to speak Portuguese. Begrudgingly, she gave in, feeling that she had little

choice, but she warned him that her Portuguese was not very good. He smiled as the camera rolled and Sarah struggled to express herself clearly.

What shocked Maggie even more than this brazen linguistic arm-twisting, however, was the public reaction to Sarah's interview in one of the Portuguese-language community newspapers the following week. In the excerpt below, Maggie remembers how a community journalist openly criticised Sarah's limited Portuguese skills while also undermining her gendered and cultural identities.

M: Some jackass ... wrote something like, oh, "*a menina é muito bonita* but without the Portuguese language she's nothing!" ... and here's a girl who busted her ass to improve the perception of our community, but does the community deserve someone like her? No! That's why, some days, I feel like pissing on my community!

Running into these kinds of constraints led Maggie to give up on public performances of portugueseness, choosing instead to perform it privately with family and friends.

Multiple identities, same difference

The last example of a second-generation Portuguese-Canadian negotiating essentialist discourses of language, identity and difference relates to a young woman in her late twenties named Ana, also of Azorean descent. Born in Canada to working-class parents from São Miguel, Ana is able to mobilise multiple identities: Canadian, Azorean, Portuguese-Canadian and even Brazilian. We met at a public conference on "Portuguese cultural survival" organised by an ethnic association in Toronto. When she stood up in the audience to voice her opinion on the topic of "linguistic survival" I knew there was something unique about her. Firstly, it is extremely rare to see young people by themselves at events like this which cater to an older crowd. Furthermore, it is also rare to see a young woman dare to speak up in a monolingual Portuguese space dominated by older men. But when she spoke, I was even more surprised because she made a considerable effort to speak in Portuguese instead of English, despite several mistakes, and because she spoke in Brazilian Portuguese. The older men in the room were just as surprised as I was, and many of them tried to shut her up by heckling and mocking her loudly. In my opinion, they felt threatened by what she repres-

ented, by what she had to say, and by how she said it because it challenged their privileged position in the market.

Ana criticised the tendency that many Mainlanders have to constantly correct and judge the Portuguese spoken by second-generation youth in a manner that can be so demoralising that they have no desire to speak it. The following is an excerpt from the public recording I made on that day.

A: A huge obstacle for most Portuguese youth to learn how to speak Portuguese, to want to learn ... is the habit [mispronounced] of the more, of the older generations, of criticising the young people's Portuguese (the men at the back of the room are very disruptive, making noise and openly mocking her: "Yeah! Yeah! That's it! That's it!") ... If you continue to criticise the way that they speak, that they don't speak so good, the youth will lose interest in speaking, and if they don't have interest they won't want to go to Portuguese school. ... When I was very young ... I remember the experiences I had when I tried to speak Portuguese and, in the [m.] the [f.] parties at church I always heard "Ahh, your Portuguese isn't very good!" or "You're speaking Azorean, you're not speaking Portuguese!" (more noise from the men) The people from the Mainland have to respect that Azoreans will speak with an Azorean accent and we [Azoreans] have to speak it with pride. Now I speak with the accent from Brazil (muffled laughs) because I lived in Brazil. So the Portuguese and Azoreans say, "But you don't speak Portuguese, you speak Brazilian!" (laughter and rumbling gets louder)²⁹

I cannot overstate the awkwardness of watching control of the floor be so vocally disputed. It was a rare public contestation of the dominant discourses of portugueseness that I have never seen repeated. The same kind of people who tried to silence Ana as a child (suggesting that her Azoreanness was "deviant" from the Mainland norm) were now, years later, trying to si-

²⁹Here is the original, somewhat "choppy" Portuguese version: *Um grande obstáculo por muitos jovens portugueses para para aprender a falar português, para querer falar [...] é a costuma das gerações mais, com mais idade, de criticar o português dos jovens (the men at the back of the room are very disruptive, making noise and openly mocking her "É! É! é isso, é isso") ... Se continuam a criticar os jovens portugueses de maneira que eles falam, que eles não falam tão bom, os jovens vão perder o interesse de falar, e se não têm o interesse não vão querer ir para a escola portuguesa. ... Quando eu era muito jovem ... eu lembro de experiências que eu tive a tentar a falar português e, na nos nas festas na igreja eu sempre ouvia "Ahh, o seu português não é muito bom!" ou "Você tá falando o açoriano, não tá falando o português!" O pessoal do Continente tem que respeitar que os Açorianos vão falar com o sotaque açoriano e nós devemos a falar com orgulho. Agora já falo o sotaque do Brasil porque eu morei no Brasil. Agora os Portugueses e Açorianos vão, "Mas você não fala português, fala brasileiro!"*

lence her as she spoke Brazilian Portuguese (even more different than the Mainland norm) and as she lifted the veil of secrecy over the naturalised, cultural and linguistic tensions that exist within Toronto's Portuguese market. Ana suggests that the conditions of the Portuguese-speaking market in Brazil, where she participated in an academic exchange program, were different and that there she was not discriminated against for the way she spoke Portuguese. In fact, she felt so comfortable speaking it on a daily basis in Brazil that she adopted many aspects of Brazilian Portuguese language, culture and identity ... which are not welcome differences if one is invested in Toronto's Portuguese market. Subsequently, Ana has positioned herself in other markets.

Conclusion: Protecting the market to what end?

The critical look at negotiations of language and identity presented in this paper highlights the ongoing need to focus on questions of inclusion and exclusion within essentialised social groups, like the Portuguese in Toronto, and on the challenges of integrating social, linguistic (and other) differences. When it comes to defining and producing "legitimate" constructions of portugueseness for the essentialising discourses of Portuguese nationalism and Canadian multiculturalism, we have seen how Mainlanders are in positions of power and that the dominant constructions, naturalised as the norm, relate to romanticised views of Mainland Portugal. Regional differences in language, culture, history and identity are ignored/masked, and a false uniformity is constructed through community institutions (*i.e.* Portuguese language schools, ethnic media, cultural associations, festivals and businesses) that portray a homogenous view of Portugal and that produce a standard Portuguese monolingualism despite the multilingual and multicultural repertoires of Portuguese-Canadians.

Speaking a non-standard variety of Portuguese ("Azorean" or otherwise), speaking a bilingual mixture of English and Portuguese (known as *portinglês*³⁰), or speaking in English and affirming an Azorean, Canadian or mixed identity can all be seen as threats to the dominant discourse of portugueseness and to the historical structure of its diasporic market, which is

³⁰Adalino Cabral, "Portinglês: The Language of Portuguese-speaking People in Selected English-speaking Communities," Ph.D. Thesis, Boston College (1985).

built on the homogenising ideology of the nation state and of multiculturalism that equates one nation with one language and one people. Protecting the market also reproduces it and reinforces the positioning of people on different sides of boundaries, depending on the legitimacy and the value of their symbolic and material resources.

By trying to maintain the same Portuguese ethnolinguistic boundaries of old, the ethnic elite is recreating the conditions that reproduce old internal divisions and processes of marginalisation that make and mask difference, even among the Canadian-born multicultural generations. The future of the market remains uncertain as the dominant discourse of cultural survival and celebration is confronted with the reality of cultural diversity and change led by immigration, the globalised new economy, gentrification, and young social actors with multiple identities and language repertoires that challenge the fragile uniformity and stability of a monolingual and monocultural social structure.

The ethnic elite is so invested in its positions of power and in its market (legitimised symbolically and materially by Canadian multiculturalism), that it has not been willing to compromise on questions of language, culture and identity. Yet, if some kinds of meaningful recognition or accommodations are not made to value historical and new differences, then future generations of Portuguese–Canadians may feel excluded from and choose not to invest in Toronto’s Portuguese ethnolinguistic market. The ethnographic data presented here alludes to the real social consequences of negative socio-linguistic ideologies in situated contexts and further study, on an even larger scale, would benefit the development of multicultural policies and initiatives towards social cohesion and integration.

Ethnographies are not just about “giving voice” to participants or trying to tell their exact story; they are also about providing an illuminating account from the researcher’s perspective that explores social processes and generates possible explanations for why people do what they do.³¹ A limitation of this paper may be its small sample size and its focus on the experiences of a limited number of people, which makes it difficult to make broad claims with respect to the implications of this study. Nevertheless, the critic-

³¹Monica Heller, “Doing Ethnography”, in Li Wei and Melissa G. Moyer, eds., *The Blackwell Guide to Research Methods in Bilingualism and Multilingualism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 249-262.

al reflection on the construction of “communities” as “markets” helps contextualise social and linguistic processes of marginalisation, supported by ethnographic data, that have contributed to silencing and excluding the majority of Toronto’s Portuguese–Canadians for nearly sixty years.