

Álvarez López, Laura, Perpétua Gonçalves and Juanito Ornelas de Avelar (eds.). *The Portuguese Language Continuum in Africa and Brazil*, 2018. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Reviewed by Marie-Eve Bouchard, Stockholm University

The Portuguese Language Continuum in Africa and Brazil, edited by Laura Álvarez López, Perpétua Gonçalves, and Juanito Ornelas de Avelar, is the latest volume in the book series *Issues in Hispanic and Lusophone Linguistics*, by John Benjamin Publishing Company. Drawing upon Margarida Petter's (2009) continuum of Portuguese in Africa and Brazil, its objective is twofold: 1) to examine structural properties shared by the varieties of the Afro-Brazilian continuum, and 2) to describe sociocultural contexts from which they have emerged, and their present-day domains of language use.

In Chapter 1, *Theoretical, empirical and methodological approaches for studying the Afro-Brazilian continuum in Portuguese*, Charlotte Galves explores linguistic features characteristic of Brazilian Portuguese (BP), dividing the features into two sets: the ones that are typical of all Brazilian dialects, and the ones that are restricted to isolated Afro-Brazilian and rural communities. According to the author, one main piece of evidence for the existence of the Afro-Brazilian continuum is the fact that all of these features characteristic of BP can also be found in the African varieties of Portuguese. Galves concludes that more information about the external ecology of contact is essential in order to study the evolution of these new Portuguese languages.

Chapter 2, *Research on L2 varieties of European languages* by Perpétua Gonçalves, offers a discussion on the concepts of internal- and external-language. The author argues that a clear-cut distinction between these two concepts is necessary to further describe the new grammars of second language (L2) varieties, and that adopting an internal-language perspective in the study of L2 varieties makes it possible to provide stronger generalisations about linguistic innovations (in these L2 varieties). Using lexicon-syntactic and morphosyntactic data from Mozambican Portuguese (MP), the author demonstrates that linguistic innovations in MP belong to a consistent grammatical system and are new formal properties of the MP grammar, rather than the results of failures in L2 acquisition.

In Chapter 3, *Issues on the history of Portuguese in and of Brazil*, Dinah Callou presents an overview of the literature on the origin of BP. She gives great importance to the expansive Brazilian territory, and writes that there is “not one

history, but *several* histories of Brazilian Portuguese” (p. 70). To show that Brazil is a heterogeneous territory and that BP could not develop in the same way all over the country, Callou presents data from the *Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística* (IBGE) and a brief study on plural agreement marking to show that, in fact, sociohistorical issues are not sufficient to explain the use of non-standard features.

Chapter 4, *Portuguese and African languages in Mozambique* by Feliciano Chimbutane, offers a historical and sociolinguistic review of MP, discussing also language-in-education policies and their consequences for language practices and attitudes. According to Chimbutane, the spread of Portuguese in Mozambique is related to the expansion of the school network and the increased access to formal education. The author views MP as a continuum of varieties (instead of one unified MP), which correlate with different social factors such as schooling, the use of Portuguese as L1 or L2 and of other languages, the urban-rural divide, and profession.

In Chapter 5, *Angolan Portuguese: Its historical development and current sociolinguistic setting*, Liliana Inverno discusses the historical and sociolinguistic situation of Angola. Inverno considers Angolan Portuguese (AP) to be a partially restructured vernacular that developed out of a continuum of L2 varieties of Portuguese that then began to reapproach EP through the acquisition of norms and schooling. Inverno gives an overview of the lexical, phonetic, and morphosyntactic features of AP, based on the existing literature, concluding that in order to position the different varieties of Portuguese on a continuum, it is important to consider the linguistic traits that make each of these varieties unique, and the traits that occur at different rates in each variety.

In Chapter 6, *Cabo Verde: Portraying a speech community*, Amália de Melo Lopes adopts an ideological approach to the sociolinguistic situation of Cabo Verde. Using data from questionnaires and interviews, the author argues that the results show Cape Verdean Creole (CVC) is the language of identity and culture (*we code*) while Cape Verdean Portuguese (CVP) is not necessarily only a *they code*, because it is also perceived as useful for writing purposes. Most Cape Verdeans display a favorable attitude towards bilingualism with diglossia. The author does not interpret the results as an indication a language shift is underway. Rather, favorable attitudes towards CVC and the prestige of CVP indicate the maintenance of these two languages.

In Chapter 7, *From creoles to Portuguese: Language shift in São Tomé and Príncipe*, Tjerk Hagemeijer discusses the language shift from the Creoles to Portuguese and the nativization of Portuguese in this small nation-state in the Gulf of Guinea. The history of São Tomé and Príncipe, along with its languages,

is divided into two main colonization phases: the first one from late 15th century to late 19th century, related to sugar cane cultivation and the emergence of three creole languages, and the second one from late 19th to 1975, related to coffee and cocoa cultivation and the massive arrival of indentured laborers. The independence of the country in 1975 and the recognition of Portuguese as the only official language has favored the acquisition of Portuguese as an L1.

Chapter 8, *Directional complements, existential sentences and locatives in the Afro-Brazilian continuum of Portuguese* by Juanito Ornelas de Avelar and Laura Álvarez López, focuses on two sets of innovative features: new uses of prepositions in directional complements of motion verbs, and the emergence of *ter* ‘to have’ in existential constructions. For each of the two sets, the authors show and discuss the innovative features in MP, AP, and BP, and compare them to their use in Bantu languages. They conclude that these two innovations are actually related, and that they result from the reanalysis of *em NP* (noun phrase) as a prepositionless phrase, which itself is due to transfer from Bantu languages to Portuguese through the process of L2 acquisition.

In Chapter 9, *The Africa-Brazil continuum: The case of passives and impersonal constructions*, Margarida Petter, Esmeralda Vailita Negrão, and Evani Viotti hypothesize that some impersonal constructions of BP and a type of passive construction in AP are outcome of contact between Bantu languages and classical Portuguese from the 15th century (rather than EP). The authors argue that a pool of linguistic features was formed in the ecologies of language practices in colonial Brazil and Angola. Speakers selected linguistic features from these respective pools according to what they perceived as congruent, which then formed the basis for today’s BP and AP.

In Chapter 10, *Language contact and variation in Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe*, Nélia Alexandre and Rita Gonçalves compare morphosyntactic features of CVP and STP and discuss the convergences and divergences they observe. The divergences identified by the authors lead them to believe that language contact alone cannot explain the linguistic outcomes; in fact, although the respective creole languages in contact with CVP and STP behave similarly with respect to object pronouns and relativization strategies, their contact generated different outcomes.

In Chapter 11, *The agreement continuum in urban samples of African, Brazilian, and European varieties of Portuguese*, Silvia Figueiredo Brandão and Silvia Rodrigues Vieira take a variationist approach to investigating nominal and verbal agreement in four varieties of Portuguese: BP, EP, STP, and MP. Their results show that nominal and verbal agreement in EP is categorical or semi-categorical, which sets this variety apart from the other three varieties,

in which such agreement is rather variable. The authors conclude that if these Portuguese varieties were to be positioned on an Afro-Brazilian continuum with greater or lesser rates of plural marking, level of education is a key social factor to be taken into consideration.

The volume ends with an epilogue written by Alan Baxter, in which he discusses the main points of convergence among the non-EP varieties of Portuguese, and shows how Petter's proposed continuum is a useful comparative construct to study the Portuguese varieties of Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Mozambique, and São Tomé-Príncipe.

This book provides a valuable contribution to the study of non-European Portuguese varieties, and to the ongoing discussion of the outcomes of language contact in the former Portuguese colonies. In my opinion, it brings together two main novelties: the availability of the different authors' work in English (most usually published in Portuguese), and the linking of these works together under the concept of an Afro-Brazilian continuum. The breadth of this book could have been broader by including a chapter on Guinean Portuguese, phonetic analyses, and more data on rural varieties of Portuguese. But I see what is missing in this book as a call for more research on the growing field of African Portuguese linguistics.

Reference

- Petter, Margarida. 2009. O continuum afro-brasileiro do português. In Charlotte Galves, Hélder Garmes & Fernando Ribeiro (eds.), *África-Brasil – Caminhos da língua portuguesa*, 158-173. Campinas: Editora da Unicamp.