

Chapter 3

Portuguese in Germany: considering issues of heritage language development and biliteracy

INTRODUCTION

Germany has a strong tradition of immigration, which became an important feature of the German society from the early fifties on, when the country had to be rebuilt after its almost complete destruction during World War II. In the fifties and sixties, Germany signed bilateral recruitment agreements with several countries like Italy (1960), Turkey (1961) and Portugal (1964), allowing unqualified guest workers in the industrial sector to take positions with minimal training requirements (Feld et. al., 2017). Whereas the first immigration waves were mainly composed of working-class immigrants, during the last decade, changes in the field of labor migration have intensified. New organizations and technology industries have emerged and the profile of international workers' mobility started to change (Laubenthal, 2017; Maletzky, 2017). While migration from Portugal was part of the first immigration phase, Brazilian immigrants started to come to Germany only after 1980, with a different profile compared to the first Portuguese migration wave. For the latter, Germany was seen mainly as a workplace, where (particularly) men had the chance to improve their (family) living standards. In this sense, this early migration was meant to be limited in time; thus, migrants had the wish, and were encouraged by official German policies, to move back to their home countries, as soon as the work was done (Pinheiro, 2010). In the early 1990s, asylum seekers, ethnic Germans returning from Eastern Europe or other countries moved to Germany. At this time, with the combination of the crash of Brazilian economy, corruption, and cheaper air fares, Brazilians began to discover Germany (Stelzig, 2008). In 2003, around 28,000 Brazilians were living in Germany. This number increased significantly in the last 17 years. In 2016, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Relations estimated that there were 85,272 Brazilians living in Germany. The Brazilian migration profile bore particularities that were absent from the Portuguese profile. A main difference is related with gender: most immigrants were women, living in a binational relationship (mostly with a German partner), without any desire to move back to Brazil (Fauss, 2005; Ladilova, 2019). Ladilova (2019) identifies a diversity of factors triggering the decision of Brazilian women to immigrate, which include the intention to work and to study abroad, a long-lasting curiosity to know other countries, the wish for better future perspectives and the need to escape from violence, poverty and discrimination.

A growing body of research on immigration analyses how individual and community migration stories specifically contribute to the maintenance and the promotion of the language and culture of origin in the migration context. Carnicer (2018), for instance, tries to explain the intrinsic social networks and the particular role of the family in establishing educational strategies and multilingual language habits. According to Carnicer (2018), factors that shape these strategies and habits are, for example, the fact that mostly female immigrants are responsible for their children's education or the foreseen length of stay in the migration country, i.e. if the immigrants will be living for a short period of time in the host society or if they have no desire to return leads to different attitudes towards the maintenance of the language of origin.

On a more speaker-centered perspective, more recently, an important number of studies has tried to quantitatively correlate the various extra-linguistic factors that interact in the

development of a heritage language (HL) with the degree of bilingualism that child and adult heritage speaker eventually attain (Haman et al., 2017; Schwartz, 2008). By applying detailed language background questionnaires, which allow for statistical analyses (e.g. Unsworth, 2012), these studies show that the maintenance of HLs in second generation children depend on complex interactions between parental attitudes towards bilingualism, their degree of formal education in the HL, the number of HL-speaking people interacting with the children on a daily basis and the number of cultural and leisure activities performed in the HLs.

In the case of the transmission of Portuguese as heritage language (PHL) in Germany, there are, in fact, various sociolinguistic factors that shape the development of diverse strategies of HL transmission. The interaction of these factors favours the maintenance of this language in different degrees among Brazilian and Portuguese-descendant migrants.

The first attempts to implement a formal education in PHL were made when an increasing number of Portuguese migrants started to bring their families to Germany. Their children required formal education to join the Portuguese educational system if their plans were to return to Portugal in the future (Azevedo, 2003). On the Brazilian side, where immigration was restricted to small communities, we find efforts made by more isolated groups to offer more informal activities, such as bilingual German-Portuguese kindergartens and some initiatives which promote PHL courses (Lira, 2017a).

Despite different implementation strategies, Portuguese and Brazilian communities seek to offer strategic PHL teaching activities. The present paper aims at describing this effort and shows that the contact of Portuguese-speaking people in Germany with their language of origin is very diverse. As it is common for HL speakers in general (Montrul, 2016; Ortega, 2019), the research on PHL in Germany identifies various profiles of heritage speakers (HSs) in a continuum from individuals with low level of contact and people with daily interaction with Portuguese, at home or at school, including relatives who live in Brazil or in Portugal.

In this article, we discuss the results of two empirical studies, which focused on HSs groups who were enrolled in formal PHL teaching activities in schools managed by *Camões Institute*¹ in Stuttgart and by *Linguarte*² in Munich. The first study investigates the lexical competence of Portuguese-descendant children (Correia & Flores, 2017). It shows very stable lexical knowledge of PHL children and discusses the effects of variable input on children's competence outcomes. The second study focuses on PHL orthography, relating to the orthographic knowledge with variable proficiency and literacy levels of the PHL students (Lira, 2017b). Both studies apply sociolinguistic background questionnaires in order to circumscribe the HSs' language acquisition process and habits of language use and, thus, account for the well-known variability of HSs' linguistic profile.

An initial section gives a chronological overview of the organization of PHL classes in the last 50 years in the German-speaking territory with a particular focus on the institutions involved in these classes (Brazilian, Portuguese and German institutions). In addition to institutional support on formal HL teaching, we show that non-institutional parental organizations also play an important role in the development of literacy skills in the HL. After reviewing two empirical studies on HL development in Portuguese and Brazilian communities, the paper concludes with a discussion of didactic strategies that aim at promoting the students' learning process. Furthermore, we discuss the role of the previous knowledge of the dominant language that HL

¹ <https://www.instituto-camoes.pt/activity/o-que-fazemos/investigacao/centros-culturais/alemanha>

² www.linguarte.de

children bring into the HL classroom in addition to their home language, which should be helpful to develop different learning activities.

PORTUGUESE HERITAGE LANGUAGE CLASSES IN GERMANY: AN OVERVIEW

In this section, we present a comparative description of the migration flow from Portugal and Brazil to Germany and highlight its most important differences and similarities. We further sketch the development of institutional and non-institutional PHL courses in Germany.

Portuguese in Germany

Migration from Portugal to Germany began still during the Portuguese dictatorship, in the late fifties. The increasing migration flow from Portugal to other European countries (starting with France) was motivated by the Colonial war, in which Portugal was immersed, and the impoverishment that affected a significant proportion of the Portuguese population. Particularly for underprivileged social classes from rural areas, leaving Portugal was an escape from poverty and an opportunity to improve their living standards. In March 1964, at the height of the so-called German economic miracle, Portugal and Germany signed a bilateral agreement on labour recruitment, which should regulate the temporary presence of Portuguese labourers in German factories (Pinheiro, 2010). The term used by the German government to refer to these migrants reflects the short-term nature of this working stay: *Gastarbeiter* (“guest worker”). At this time, the Portuguese migrant population was almost exclusively constituted by men, who migrated without their families. During the period from 1955 to 1973 almost 166,000 Portuguese labourers were working in German factories and at the Hamburg harbour (Freund, 2007). The aim of the German government was to encourage the return of this population to their home countries after having satisfied the economic need for manpower. Many workers have, in fact, returned to Portugal in the late seventies and the eighties, but the majority of these first-generation economic migrants stayed in the host country and requested a license to have their families joining them (Pinheiro, 2010). In many cases, going back to Portugal after having worked for some years in Germany was still a lifetime aim. This motivated the growing demand for Portuguese classes in areas with large Portuguese communities. The newly immigrated children, or even the inborn second generation, should be linguistically prepared to join the Portuguese school system in the case of return to the home country (Azevedo, 2003). As a result, so-called *escolas portuguesas* (Portuguese schools) were established as complementary afternoon schools in some cities with growing Portuguese communities in the seventies. Still without a uniformed legislative basis, these courses, officially named *Curso de Língua e Cultura Portuguesas* (Portuguese Language and Culture Courses), were either organized by the Portuguese embassy in Bonn and their various local consulates, by the German states, or with the support of the Portuguese Catholic Mission in Germany.

As an example, the Portuguese Catholic Mission in Hamburg established one of the first Portuguese schools in Germany, which started in January 1973 with 64 first to fourth graders (Azevedo, 2003). Importantly, the main subject of the newly established courses was Portuguese, taught as native language, with an identical curriculum as in the home country. Consequently, also the school books equaled the books used in Portuguese schools and were directly imported from the home country. In addition to Portuguese, the courses included some history, geography and, in more advanced grades, Portuguese literature as well. The classes took place once or twice a week amounting a maximum of three to six hours.

In the four decades after the formal establishment of the Portuguese Language and Culture Courses, an ongoing process of organization of a structured network called “Teaching Portuguese Abroad” took place. The responsibility for the Portuguese Language and Culture

Courses passed from the embassy and consulates to the *Instituto Camões* (currently called *Camões - Institute of Cooperation and Language, I.P.*), the Portuguese institution that already coordinated the courses of Portuguese as Foreign Language around the world. A decree-law from 2006 introduced a new legal basis for the coordination of all types of Portuguese courses abroad, which was revised in 2012, when substantial legal and organizational changes were made to the “Teaching abroad network”.³ At that time, the Portuguese Language and Culture Courses have definitely lost the aim of teaching Portuguese as native language, giving place to HL courses, which aggregate children from various backgrounds and different levels of proficiency. In 2009, the Framework of Reference for Teaching Portuguese Abroad (*Quadro de Referência para o Ensino Português no Estrangeiro / QuaREPE*), based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, established guidelines for teaching and evaluating heritage speakers attending these courses (Grosso et al., 2011). This framework and a number of further orders and guiding documents also regulate the type of teaching activities, materials and books used in these courses (which no longer equal the books used in Portugal) and the complementary training for teachers.

Currently, Camões, I.P., which has a wide network of “Teaching abroad” classes all over the world, offers HL classes in Germany in the states of Berlin, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein, Niedersachsen, Bremen, Baden-Württemberg, Bayern and Hessen. In 2017, a total of 35 teachers were teaching Portuguese as HL in 119 schools distributed through 99 different locations from north to south Germany. Approximately 3,015 students coming from 1,137 schools attended these courses. Interestingly, not only Portuguese-descendent children have been enrolled in these HL classes, but also Brazilians and children from Portuguese-speaking African countries (e.g. Cape Verde, Angola, and Mozambique). The teachers working in these courses have been hired by the Camões, I.P. and paid by the Portuguese state. Additionally, various German states (Nordrhein-Westfalen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Hessen, Hamburg & Niedersachsen) also offer Portuguese Language courses in 50 different locations, either integrated in the normal school curriculum, as afternoon HL classes or in bilingual schools (*Coordenação do Ensino Português na Alemanha*, 2017).

Brazilians in Germany

While Portuguese immigration in Germany has been the focus of several studies in the last 50 years, Brazilian immigration only began to be actually observed in the late 1980s, as reported by Fauss (2005), when the first major wave of Brazilian immigrants (about 28,000) arrived in Germany.

There are several studies focusing on Brazilian immigration in Germany, its motivation and characteristics (Carnicer, 2018; Fürstenau, 2008; Kerber, 2012; 2019; Ladilova, 2019; Stelzig-Willutzki, 2008), however the number of Brazilians living in Germany is not agreed upon. While the German Federal Statistical Office reported, in 2017, a total of 42,580 Brazilians with permanent residence living in Germany, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs counted up to 85,272 Brazilians. Ladilova (2019) considers that this difference is due to the sources of information: the German Federal Statistical Office does not include Brazilians who have double citizenship. In this case, their European citizenship is registered as country of origin and not Brazil.

As mentioned above, the socio-economic profile of the Brazilian immigrants is different from the Portuguese one. In the first phase, mainly men immigrated to Germany from Portugal; on

³ See overview of the history of Camões Institute and the legal and organizational changes of the network in <https://www.instituto-camoes.pt>.

the Brazilian side, there was a larger number of women, who lived in a binational relationship, followed by expatriate workers of German companies, students and au-pairs (Ladilova, 2019; Lira, 2018). An overview of official statistics about Brazilian immigration to Germany validates this observation: female Brazilian immigrants outnumber male immigrants. Brazilian women are also the focus of most studies on Brazilian migration (see Kerber, 2019; Stelzig-Willutzki, 2012). Although Brazilian women generally wish to be integrated in German society, their relationship with Brazilian culture and their language of origin becomes relevant as part of their identity. In this sense, for most of these female first-generation migrants, it is important to transmit and to maintain Portuguese inside their own families, providing educational strategies in the home language. Carnicer (2018) explains that Brazilian mothers mentioned “that their children’s Portuguese language skills are a concern in Germany because the children tend to use German in their daily lives and the “heritage language programs” offered by the public schools in Germany are seen as inadequate” (p. 178).

Considering this later and differential immigration, the extent of initiatives and courses of PHL in the Brazilian variant is comparatively restricted compared to the Portuguese counterpart. An important role in promoting PHL classes for the Brazilian community is played by cultural associations, managed by Brazilian parents - mostly mothers, as reported by Lira (2017a). Their objectives are to provide Brazilian Portuguese (BP) instruction in a bilingual environment and to promote the contact between Brazilian families, in particular their children, through cultural activities. This is the case, for instance, of *Estrelinha*, a Brazilian kindergarten founded in 1998 in Munich; *Curumim*, in Frankfurt am Main; and other kindergartens in Nordrhein-Westfalen, Hamburg, Hessen and Berlin. Apart from bilingual kindergartens, which have local government support, there are also several Portuguese reading groups⁴ in different German cities, organized by Brazilian parents.

Complementary classes of BP, similar to those organized by the Portuguese community, have been offered through different associations, which have no institutional support from the Brazilian nor the German governments. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that the Ministry of Culture Council (*Konferenz der Kulturminister der Länder - KMK*) recommended in 1976 that language classes should be offered in schools as extracurricular activities, the so-called *Muttersprachlicher Ergänzungsunterricht* (complementary classes for mother tongue) (Lira 2017a). Based on these recommendations, Brazilian Portuguese classes were offered from 2003 to 2007 in Bavaria. In other regions, such as Berlin and Hamburg, BP HL classes started to be integrated in bilingual schools, being part of the students’ school curriculum (APEGO School)⁵.

Unlike the case of Portuguese HL courses, as sketched above, Brazilian associations still seek guidelines to define their HL curriculum. Many courses still base their curriculum on the Brazilian National Curriculum Parameters (PCNs), offering lessons with didactic materials coming directly from Brazil. As an alternative, others use materials produced by the teachers themselves. However, the PCNs disregard the required needs of a HL curriculum. This means that Brazilian schools and associations do not possess a Framework of Reference similar to the European Portuguese framework (QuaREPE). Despite all the issues about the lack of an adapted curriculum, there are BP courses taking place in the afternoons or on Saturdays, in youth and/or social centers. In most cases, the rented premises need to be adapted to a classroom and the

⁴ These reading groups are mostly part of a group called *Mala de Herança* and provide reading days twice a month, sometimes with theater presentations by children or a reading by the author.

⁵ APEGO offers classes in German, Spanish and Portuguese in Berlin since 2018. For more information: apego-schule.de.

parents have to pay for it – which could be the main reason for the low number of attendants, as described by Godoi and Litran (2017) and Lira (2017a).

In face of this very diverse reality, the existence of autonomous Brazilian HL courses is still reduced. One reason is related to the fact that many Brazilian-descendent children are enrolled in the courses offered by the Camões Institute or in other Portuguese schools spread throughout Germany. These courses offer free lessons or classes with a low fee. For example, in Munich, there is a large number of Brazilian children attending the Portuguese complementary class offered by *Camões Institute*. Aside from that, in Bavaria, for instance, the number of known initiatives teaching BP HL is actually four⁶: *Linguarte* and *Portugiesisch Dantas* in Munich and *Casa do Brasil* and *Turma do Balão Bávavo* in nearby cities. In addition to these formal classes, there are, in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, about four reading groups and more than 30 capoeira groups. In fact, these groups are also relevant vectors of informal education in BP (Lira, 2018).

Despite the still low enrollment of Brazilian-descendant children in HL education initiatives, Bavaria hosted the first training workshop for BP teachers⁷ and the 2nd European Symposium on the Teaching of Portuguese as a Heritage Language⁸. Furthermore, *Linguarte* introduced a HL teacher training course in 2018, which is based on a partnership between *Linguarte* and two Brazilian universities (*Universidade Estadual do Sudoeste da Bahia* and *Universidade Federal do Ceará*). These initiatives show that teacher training is considered very important by people who organize and coordinate Brazilian associations.

SOME EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE ON HERITAGE PORTUGUESE IN GERMANY

In this section, we will review some empirical evidence on the development of PHL in both varieties, European and Brazilian Portuguese, focusing on HSs' lexical and orthography knowledge. Data were collected in the Stuttgart area, in a PHL class offered by the *Camões Institute*, and in a PHL group from *Linguarte* in Munich.

Lexical development

A significant amount of the empirical research that has emerged in the last decades on bilingual language development focused on the lexical competence of bilingual children (e.g. Hoff et al., 2014). A central question in this research field consists in assessing whether bilingual children show patterns of lexical development similar to those of monolingual children, both in terms of vocabulary size and of lexical composition. Moreover, many studies attempt to assess the role of factors related to the quantity and quality of the input the children receive in both their languages (e.g. Thordardottir, 2011). The language that is less available to the child is of particular interest in this domain. It allows us to tap into the relationship between reduced input and the development of lexical knowledge. In fact, several studies which focused on the role of input factors in bilingual lexical acquisition have demonstrated that the variation in the rate of bilingual children lexical acquisition and the size of their productive and the receptive lexicon in each language is significantly associated with factors related to their language experience, i.e. to the quantity and the quality of language exposure.

As outlined in the introduction, the language profile of Portuguese and Brazilian heritage speakers living in Germany is very diverse, ranging from children who have intensive contact with Portuguese in their daily interactions to speakers who have very reduced contact with their

⁶ *Portugiesisch Dantas* is a language school which offers Brazilian Portuguese HL classes.

⁷ <https://eloeuropeu.org/historico-de-atividades-do-elo-europeu/>

⁸ <https://sites.google.com/site/sepolh/arquivo/ii-sepolh>

HL. Some empirical evidence on the effect of these different language experiences on the development of productive lexical skills comes from a study conducted by Correia and Flores (2017) on a group of 23 child heritage speakers of European Portuguese (EP), living in the area of Stuttgart.

The 6-11 years-old children (mean age = 8.36; SD = 1.36) analyzed in this research attended the 90-min classes of PHL courses, offered by the *Camões I.P.* as an extracurricular activity. At least one of their parents was Portuguese. The children were either born in Germany or migrated to this country before the age of five. Despite this commonality, the children's contact with EP varied significantly. The particular amount of exposure to EP of each child was assessed through a detailed parental questionnaire, adapted from Gutiérrez-Clellen and Kreiter (2003) and Unsworth (2012), which was filled in by one of the parents. The questionnaire consisted of two sections with questions on biographic and sociolinguistic information about the parents and one section on the language background of the child him-/herself.

In addition to the background questionnaire, a picture of a living room was used to elicit oral production data in Portuguese (see Figure 1). This picture was chosen from a set of pictures used by Yavas et al. (1991) and adapted by the research team of the project *Escreves como falas – falas como escreves?* (EFFE) to evaluate oral and written language skills of EP-speaking children in Portugal (Lourenço-Gomes et al., 2016). The children were asked to imagine a situation in which they had just arrived home and found the scene represented in the picture. They should narrate the events prior to that moment and describe elements displayed in the picture, so that they would produce as many lexical items as possible. The interviewer presented herself as a Portuguese native speaker without knowledge of German in order to reduce the occurrence of code-switching.



Figure 1. Picture 'Living Room' (from Yavas et al., 1991).

Furthermore, data from 21 monolingual EP children, aged between 7 and 10 years (mean age = 7.20; SD = 0.70), were selected. The children were informants of the EFFE project (Lourenço-Gomes et al., 2016) and participated in the same oral task regarding the 'living room'-picture. They attended two different primary schools in Portugal. The linguistic analysis focused on the use of nouns, verbs and adjectives in EP. Between- and within-group comparisons were made in order to assess the vocabulary size, lexical distribution and the influence of input factors on the HSs performance.

As example of the data collected, Table 1 shows the nouns, verbs and adjectives with the 10 highest frequencies produced by the HSs group.

Table 1.

Nouns, verbs and adjectives with the 10 highest frequencies produced by HSs

Frequency Rank	Nouns	Quantity of HSs (AF and RF)*	Verbs	Quantity of HSs (AF and RF)	Adjectives	Quantity of HSs (AF and RF)
1	<i>bola</i> ‘ball’	23 (100%)	<i>ver</i> ‘to see/watch’	20 (87.0%)	<i>amarelo</i> ‘yellow’	19 (82.6%)
2	<i>televisão</i> ‘television’	22 (95.7%)	<i>estar</i> ‘to be’	19 (82.6%)	<i>azul</i> ‘blue’	18 (78.3%)
3	<i>dinheiro</i> ‘money’	21 (91.3%)	<i>voar</i> ‘to fly’	18 (78.3%)	<i>vermelho</i> ‘red’	18 (78.3%)
	<i>jogo</i> ‘game’	21 (91.3%)	<i>brincar</i> ‘to play’	17 (73.9%)	<i>verde</i> ‘green’	17 (73.9%)
4	<i>livro</i> ‘book’	20 (87%)	<i>saber</i> ‘to know’	17 (73.9%)	<i>fechado</i> ‘closed’	16 (69.6%)
	<i>sofá</i> ‘sofa’	20 (87%)	<i>ser</i> ‘to be’	17 (73.9%)	<i>preto</i> ‘black’	15 (65.2%)
5	<i>bruxa</i> ‘witch’	19 (82.6%)	<i>cantar</i> ‘to sing’	14 (60.9%)	<i>aberto</i> ‘open’	14 (60.9%)
6	<i>jornal</i> ‘newspaper’	18 (78.3%)	<i>poder</i> ‘can’	13 (56.5%)	<i>branco</i> ‘white’	13 (56.5%)
	<i>mesa</i> ‘table’	18 (78.3%)	<i>arrumar</i> ‘to tidy’	11 (47.8%)	<i>desarrumado</i> ‘untidy’	10 (43.5%)
	<i>rádio</i> ‘radio’	18 (78.3%)	<i>jogar</i> ‘to play’	11 (47.8%)	<i>cinzento</i> ‘grey’	8 (34.8%)
	<i>tesoura</i> ‘scissors’	18 (78.3%)	<i>pintar</i> ‘to colour’	11 (47.8%)	<i>cor de laranja</i> ‘orange’	8 (34.8%)
7	<i>gravata</i> ‘tie’	17 (73.9%)	<i>chamar</i> ‘to call’	10 (43.5%)	<i>cor-de-rosa</i> ‘pink’	8 (34.8%)
	<i>lápiz</i> ‘pencil’	17 (73.9%)	<i>ter</i> ‘to have’	10 (43.5%)	* <i>lilás</i> ‘lilac’	8 (34.8%)
8	<i>chapéu</i> ‘hat’	16 (69.6%)	<i>ir</i> ‘to go’	8 (34.8%)	<i>castanho</i> ‘brown’	6 (26.1%)
9	<i>caixa</i> ‘box’	15 (65.2%)	<i>falar</i> ‘to speak’	7 (30.4%)	* <i>português</i> ‘portuguese’	6 (26.1%)
10	<i>planta</i> ‘plant’	14 (60.9%)	<i>fazer</i> ‘to do/make’	7 (30.4%)	<i>rosa</i> ‘pink’	6 (26.1%)
	<i>sol</i> ‘sun’	14 (60.9%)	<i>gostar</i> ‘to like’	7 (30.4%)		

* AF= Absolute frequencies; RF= Relative frequencies

Generally, the results show very robust lexical knowledge of the Portuguese HSs. They produce a total of 145 different nouns (55.3%), 71 verbs (27.1%), and 46 adjectives (17.6%), resulting

in a total number of 262 lexical items. The monolingual speakers, in turn, produce a total of 215 nouns (54.0%), 107 verbs (26.9%), and 76 adjectives (19.1%), i.e. a total of 398 different lexical items. 91 out of the 269 nouns (33.8%), 51 out of the 127 verbs (40.2%), and 31 out of the 91 adjectives (34.1%) were commonly produced by both groups, i.e. there was a considerable overlap of the lexical items used by the monolingual and the HL children. For instance, the words with the ten highest frequencies (see Table 1 for the words produced by the heritage speakers) were almost the same in both groups. The heritage speakers also used a considerable amount of different lexical items that monolingual children did not produce (and vice versa). This shows that the bilingual children possess a rich, diverse lexical repertoire on their own in their HL, which is not a small subpart of the monolinguals repertoire.

However, statistical between-group comparisons show that there were significant differences between the HSs and the monolingual children regarding the total amount of different lexical items produced ($t(42) = -3.23, p = 0.002$). This is, in fact, a common observation in bilingual children. Many studies have shown that bilingual children tend to have smaller lexical repertoires in each of their languages, compared to monolingual children. This is due to the fact that they are usually exposed to each language in different settings, resulting in the distribution of their lexical knowledge across the two languages, which is known as the “distributed characteristic” of bilingual knowledge (Oller et al., 2005).

As for the effect of the input factors, assessed through the parental questionnaire, results show positive correlations between the HSs’ lexical performance and the amount of input and output within the home environment. Particularly the quantity of EP-speaking parents is relevant for the lexical development in the HL. The HSs whose parents were both native EP speakers produced more different lexical items (specifically verbs and adjectives) than those who only had one native EP-speaking parent. This is in line with the results of other studies, which show that the lexical development of bilingual children in their HL is significantly correlated with the input they receive at home (Thordardottir, 2011).

One of the most noteworthy findings of the study discussed in this section is the fact that more than half of the investigated Portuguese–German bilingual children presented patterns of lexical development in the HL identical to those of monolingual children, despite being raised in a bilingual setting with less contact to Portuguese than children living in an exclusively monolingual context.

Orthography development

One of the features shaping HL acquisition is the way the speaker is exposed to the HL. Several authors (Flores & Melo-Pfeifer, 2014; Gass & Selinker, 2008; Montrul, 2012) consider that the development of HL linguistic skills is linked to the input the HS receive. Montrul (2012) states that one of the main differences between HSs and L2 learners is literacy acquisition. L2 learners, normally, learn the second language in a formal, school environment, whereas HSs may be illiterate or develop a limited literacy proficiency in the HL. This is related to the fact that the HL has been learned at home, without opportunity or motivation to learn such skills, like support from complementary schools. It is well known that the bilingual acquisition of orthography, i.e. the knowledge of different writing systems and their orthography rules, is crucial in stimulating reading skills in the HL. Its absence fosters the idea of a heritage speaker as a bilingual person with monolingual skills in writing. Riehl (2014) considers that the written language brings psychological, social and cultural aspects that can help the individual to reflect about the world where s/he lives and to create links between cultures. In brief, literacy is socially and culturally constructed in contexts and emphasizes the active role of children in language

socialization. Thus, it is important to note that the acquisition of writing skills (including orthographic knowledge) in the HL constitutes a constant process of dominance and use of the social functions of this language.

Many studies suggest that bilinguals have higher metalinguistic awareness and perform better on different language skills than monolinguals (Bialystok, 1988; Cummins, 1978; Kieffer, Biancarosa & Mancilla-Martinez, 2013). Metalinguistic awareness refers to the understanding that language is a system which can be analyzed and investigated from its different facets: phonological, syntactic and morphological awareness. In the acquisition of orthography, two main conditions are involved: phonological and morphological awareness (Huang, 2018). Both of them (metalinguistic awareness and acquisition of orthography) have to be stimulated in HL classrooms in order to guarantee successful development of writing skills. Furthermore, the phonological consciousness is the most important process underlying orthography acquisition. It allows the students to correlate the oral production of a phoneme with its visual production (the words) in order to identify structures that are possible and those that cannot be used in a language. In this way, the heritage speaker starts to become aware that certain graphemes do not create a written sequence in his HL. Hornberger (2004) sees biliteracy as a continuum, which at one end has the idealized bilingual, who is fully literate, and at the other end the bilingual speaker whose use of the HL is restricted to oral communication at home, without knowledge of the written language and its rules. According to Chevalier (2004: 5), HSs with minimal training in writing “tend to write the way they speak”. In fact, children in the beginning of their (bi)literacy are limited to convert what they hear into written form.

Wolff (2006) considers that children use their knowledge in the majority language as a strategy to develop their oral and writing abilities in the HL. Del Toro (2004) explains that cross-linguistic influence occurs due to the fact that children see their dominant language system as the correct one and construct their HL writing skills through the contrast between both systems. As German and Portuguese have the same writing system – the Latin alphabet – Portuguese-German bilinguals can consciously compare the systems and share learning resources based on the contrastive linguistic premises (Gast, 2012). This will cause positive transfers and/or difficulties, which will generate interferences in the development of the HL. Especially in the context of foreign language teaching, the contrastive hypothesis has been seen as a fitting way to predict or rank learning difficulties and also to develop strategies to make language acquisition more efficient.

The process of acquisition of the Portuguese orthography by heritage speakers of Brazilian Portuguese living in Germany was investigated in a study conducted by Lira (2013; 2017b). For this purpose, a group of Brazilian-descendent children aged 8.1 to 11.5 years old, who attended a course of PHL in Munich, was observed in a two-year period, for about 3 hours on two Saturdays per month. According to a background questionnaire, all were born in Germany in binational and bilingual families (in this group, all mothers were Brazilian). The children were simultaneous biliterates, i.e., they were taught how to read and write at the same time in the local language (German) and in Brazilian Portuguese, their HL. In this group, three students lived in Brazil for about three years and they were enrolled in the first school year at the Brazilian-German school or in the kindergarten. Another important factor to be mentioned is the students' proficiency at the time of data collection. Based on language assessment from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, the students were highly proficient on speaking and listening, but on reading and writing they were divided into beginners (A1-A2 level), intermediate (A2-B1) and advanced (B2-C1) speakers. Whereas two students showed little or no writing proficiency and no knowledge of grammar and orthography rules of their

HL, most of them have shown good skills on grammar and on writing skills. Despite the aspects mentioned above, the degree and type of contact with BP was diverse, as shown in Figure 2.

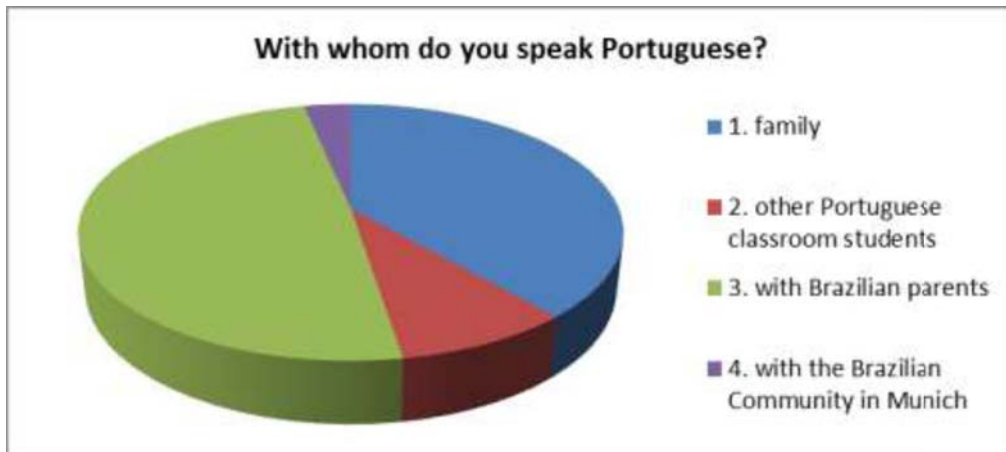


Figure 2. With whom do you speak Portuguese?

Figure 2 shows that Brazilian Portuguese is mainly used within the family, i.e. with the Brazilian parent (mainly the mother), but also with relatives residing in Brazil or even in other countries. Most of the children indicated that they spent 5-8 weeks a year in Brazil. Contact with the Brazilian community in Munich is restricted.

In Figure 3 below, we find relevant information related to the use of media in Portuguese. The use of resources such as telephone and the Internet is restricted to a small group of participants, especially because in this group few children have constant access to mobile and computer. Books and music are the most relevant sources of media in Portuguese, although the number of participants who say they never listen to music in Portuguese or read in Portuguese is relatively similar. This information is important for the analysis of the written texts of the participants, since it provides tools for the written production of the participants. Then, storytelling and reading books enhance the familiarity with orthographic rules of the HL.

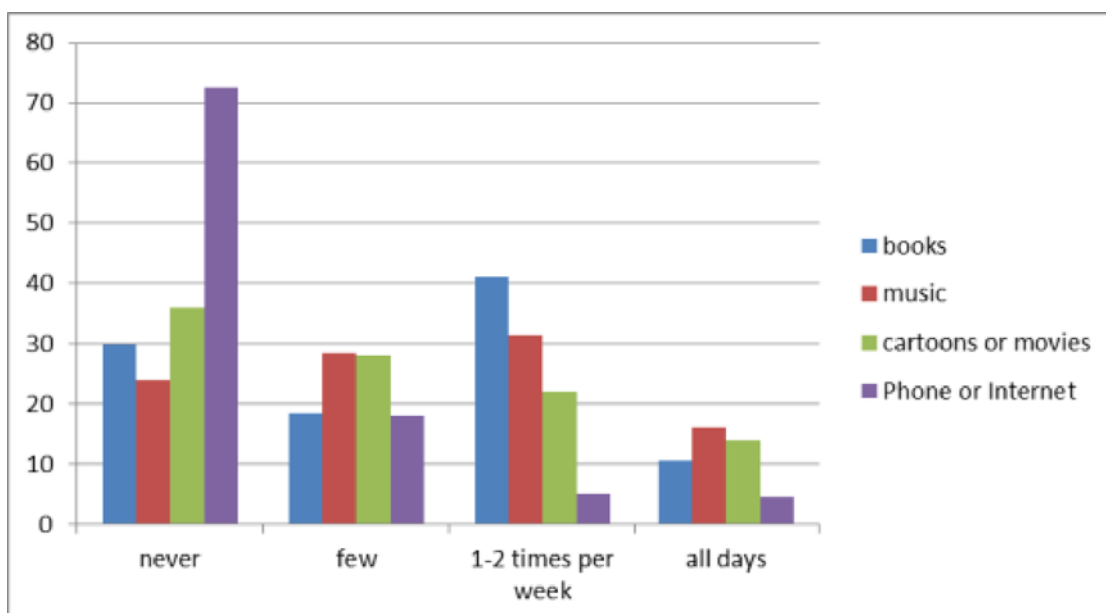


Figure 3. The use of media in Brazilian Portuguese

The main aim of this study was to detect traces of phonological transfer from German to the texts written in Brazilian Portuguese, as described by Signorini (2001), positioning these traces into the four literacy stages: pre-syllabics, syllabic, syllabic-alphabetic and alphabetic (Correia, 2001). After that, the literacy stages were compared with the HSs' writing proficiency levels. The analyzed texts were collected from various activities of written production, particularly messages, lists, recipes, dialogues and comics. Based on raw data, we could predict and categorize a large number of errors in BP language resulting from overgeneralization of rules either in German or BP. The errors primarily happened due to the graphophonemic correspondences in BP and its various representations. In German, for example, the phonem /k/ can be represented as <k,ck,c,g,ch,x,qu>, the most used being <k>. In the data, several cases where <k> is transferred to BP were identified, in contexts where <c> or <qu> were required. The sound systems of the two languages were described on the basis of structural phonology and the distribution of phonemes in German and BP was compared in order to find possible similarities and differences responsible for deviations from German to BP.

For data analysis, a list of words written with deviations was extracted from the written texts. These deviations were assessed and classified according to the possibility that they could be caused by interference from German (or not). Summarizing the main results, it could be noted that the students, at the beginning of their literacy development in PHL (A1-A2 Level), presented problems with the accents, the use of capital letters in nouns, in addition to the graphophonemic correspondences observed in both languages. Accordingly, transfer from German can be divided into distinct categories of representation of vowels and consonants, as described in the table below.

Table 2.

German-Brazilian Portuguese written word correspondence (Lira 2017b)

Category	Portuguese default	Representation used by the participants
Supression of <e> in the beginning of a word	Escola	Scola
Nasal vowel representation through <ng>	Banho	Bango
/ai/ is represented by <ei>	Baixa	Beischa
/ɔi / is represented by <eu>	boia	Beuia
before /l/ is added an h	filho	Fihlo
	casa	Kasa
Transference of <k,w,s,h>	vaca	waka
	cabeça	cabesa
	carro	caho
<lh> is represented by <lj>	toalha	Toalja

These results show that, at the beginning of their literacy process, students usually transfer their knowledge of the German orthography to their attempts of writing in Brazilian Portuguese. The more they become familiar with the rules and the graphophonemic structure of the Portuguese language, the stronger the tendency is that these transfer phenomena disappear and, consequently, the heritage speakers' orthographic abilities become closer to the formal writing style of Portuguese (Lira, 2017b). As seen in the previous study on the lexical competence of heritage speakers, also with regard to written productions, bilingual children in general perform similar to monolingual students. The results also show that the proximity to the Portuguese spelling rules is visible in later stages of development, including the disappearance of capital

letters in nouns, a characteristic of German orthography, and the use of German-type accents, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3.

Possible word representation found in intermediate level of PHL literacy students.

Category	Portuguese default	Possible Brazilian representation	German-students
Forgetfulness of vowels at the word ending or semi vowels in diphthong	Presente cadeira	Prsent cadera	
Epenthesis	futebol cadeado	Futebol cadiado	
Generalization of /e/ to <i> and of <o> to <u>	esperto lado	Isperu ladu	
<h> is not represented	hoje	Oje	
<lh> is represented either by or <l>	filho	Filio	
Redução de /m/ para <n>	com	con	
Generalization of <s>	feliz	Felis	
Use of <n> instead of <nd>	cantando	Cantano	
Accent use	vovô	Vóvo	

Based on the results shown above, it was possible to organize the table below, which shows the development of written abilities and the orthographic acquisition of BP HL. It illustrates how the children have written at the beginning of the study and the learning stages which they have crossed:

Table 4.

Stages of orthographic acquisition on BP HL

Nouns	Syllabic A1-A2 Level	Syllabic – alphabetic A2-B1 Level	Alphabetic B2-C1 Level
Sete ‘seven’	Sätschi/sätsche	Setchi/setchi	seti
Quer ‘to want’	Ka/ Cä	ke	ce
Vovô ‘grandpa’	Wowo	vowo	Vóvo
Filho ‘son’	Fihlo	filio	Filo/filho

These nouns are selected because they appeared regularly in the collected texts. They also allow us to sketch several features of the continuum of orthography acquisition in BP as HL:

(i) The pre-syllabic level does not appear in the data. The students have already passed to the next level in the majority language, German. For this reason, they transfer their orthographic knowledge to the next levels. The students in the A1-A2 level are in the syllabic stage. In this stage, the children use capital letters like in German, not only when writing nouns but also verbs. The German graphemes <ä>, <k> and <w> and <sch> were identified in this phase, providing evidence for transfer from German to BP as way to decoding BP orthography. In this stage, the children do not show knowledge of definite rules and try to write what makes sense for them.

(ii) The second stage points to the occurrence of some transfer, as shown in table 3: Generalization of /e/ to <i> and no representation of <h> are two main features of this stage. There is also some approximation to the BP orthography, but the orthographic rules still need to be internalized. Essentially, in those cases variation was observed, i.e. various forms the same word could appear (*Setchi* and *vowo*). The advanced stage is characterized by convergence to the BP orthographic system. The deviations found in this stage are also typical errors made by monolingual BP speaker. The learner is also able to correct his/her errors. The results also showed a correlation between the knowledge of the orthography rules and the amount and the type of input the children received within the home environment. The HSs who read more books switched to the next level faster than the children who had reduced contact with media in Portuguese.

Didactic strategies in PHL classrooms

The field of PHL teaching has sought didactic strategies to assist in the formal learning of the HL. In the past years, some authors (Chandrasekaran, 2008; Fairclough and Beaudrie, 2016; Melo-Pfeifer, 2016; Schader, 2016), have discussed and proposed appropriate strategies for teaching and learning the HL, so as to help teachers not only to keep offering HL courses, but also to revitalize it throughout their classes. After all, “teachers also play an important role in children’s HL learning and their ways of teaching will influence students’ ways of learning and their motivations to maintain HL” (Du, 2017: 6).

For this purpose, Azevedo Gomes (2017: 132) states that, in order to provide high-quality lessons, "it is necessary to know / recognize the characteristics of the heritage speakers and to use their strengths in favor of the systematization of HL classes". For the author, one of the most important stimulus is the phonological input, which the child receives from early on (even in the maternal womb). It is oral input that triggers the development of the phonological consciousness in the HL and allows the heritage speaker to know and use lexical structures before attending HL classes (Polinsky, 2008).

It is precisely this prior knowledge of the HL that the bilingual child brings into the HL classroom, as well as the knowledge of the dominant language, that needs to stand in the focus of HL didactics. Knowing that HL lessons have a reduced number of hours, it is necessary to offer activities that take advantage of the students' previous knowledge in order to progress with new knowledge in PHL. Concerning the didactic approach, Flores and Melo-Pfeifer (2014: 40) note, that

“it is important that HL teaching-learning methodologies in a school or extra-school environments consider aspects related to acquisition processes and dynamics of HL, developing different learning activities and rhythms, accordingly to the type and amount of contact with that language, as well as with the development stage of linguistic competence of the language learner.”

In this sense, the authors suggest the development of "bottom-up pedagogical-didactic perspectives" (Flores and Melo-Pfeifer, 2014: 40), highlighting activities that also use resources such as gestures and postures. Schader and Maluku (2016) also highlight the need to consider the children’s previous knowledge in the classroom, in order to transfer training and learning strategies from their regular classroom education into the HL class. The authors argue that using knowledge of the majority language could assist the process of HL development in an effective way. To this end, the PHL teaching materials and the activities planned by the teachers should

take into account the heterogeneous proficiency levels of the students as well as their varied language use backgrounds.

Based on these authors, we would like to highlight a didactical strategy that may be employed by HL teachers in groups with heterogeneous proficiency: reciprocal learning. This research-based strategy consists of an instructional activity, in which students with different proficiency levels work together in the classroom. They cooperate, but in previously defined roles and each student has his/her own set of exercises with instructions to summarize, predict, question, and clarify given information orally or in written form. It is an adequate strategy to foster the acquisition of vocabulary and reading comprehension, because it teaches students how to determine important ideas while discussing vocabulary and summarizing information.

One main idea of this strategy is that teachers need to designate one student to lead the activity. The students help each other in completing their specific exercises and, at the end, the group has completed all tasks.

We would like to show a concrete example of this strategy based on the book *Quem roubou a lua?* (Who stole the moon?) from the Argentinian author Mario Catelli. After reading the book aloud, the teacher organizes four groups and gives the instructions displayed on Figure 4. Each student is responsible to work on one activity, but everyone can coach each other when necessary. By collecting all responses at the end, the students have collaborated to finishing every task and have a final product of their experience.

<i>detetive</i> (detective)	<i>polícia</i> (police man)	<i>professor</i> (teacher)	<i>testemunha</i> (witness)
<i>Crie perguntas para descobrir quem roubou a lua.</i> (Formulate questions in order to discover who has stolen the moon.)	<i>Dê três motivos para o desaparecimento da lua.</i> (Give three reasons why the moon disappeared.)	<i>Que palavras você relaciona à lua?</i> (Which words do you relate to the moon?)	<i>Conte, com suas palavras o que você viu.</i> (Tell us with your own words what you saw.)

Figure 4. Instructions to work in group, employing reciprocal learning.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

As empirical evidence for HL development and associated PHL teaching activities in Germany, we discussed results from two studies focused on two linguistic domains: lexical competence and knowledge of orthography. The studies were conducted in PHL schools, with heritage-speaking students. Both highlight the importance of applying sociolinguistic background questionnaires in order to circumscribe the HSs' language acquisition process and language use habits and, thus, account for the well-known variability of HSs' linguistic profile.

It is also important to mention that bilingual students have a similar level of lexical knowledge as monolingual children living in the country of origin. In the case of PHL orthography, empirical evidence highlights the strong relationship between orthographic knowledge and the phonological consciousness, acquired by HSs throughout their oral contact with Portuguese in childhood. This shows that parents also play an important role in the domain of development

of writing skills in the HL. It is the amount of oral contact during the child's lifespan that lays the foundation for the acquisition of writing abilities in later stages of development. Furthermore, the results of Lira's (2017b) study show that the higher the students' knowledge of Portuguese, the less influence from the German language is at stake. Besides that, the more the students acquire PHL literacy, the more similar their mistakes get to the errors made by monolingual students.

Empirical data such as those discussed in the present overview constitute important tools for the development of teaching strategies in PHL courses. Since PHL teaching activities are, in general, extra-curricular and restricted to a few classes per week, it is essential that the teacher develops activities founded on the students' previous knowledge. Those strategies have to be thought in a multicultural and multilingual environment, in order to be able to take care of the linguistic heterogeneity found inside the classroom (Melo-Pfeifer & Schmidt, 2016).

To conclude, we acknowledge that the present overview of Portuguese as HL is focused mainly on European and Brazilian Portuguese. African varieties of Portuguese, which also have an important presence in the Portuguese-speaking landscape in Germany, should be integrated into future research on PHL, since they will bring interesting new insights into Portuguese-based bilingualism.

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