Brazil, English in

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1 Introduction

The presence of English as a foreign language in Brazilian education dates back to the 1800s, which may be regarded as the beginning of the spread of the language in this country. As explained by Vidotti and Dornelas (2007), English was perceived as important by D. João VI (King of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil, and the Algarves, and thus ruler of Brazil before its independence) mainly as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain and the opening of ports in Brazil. By 1834, the language had become a requisite for those entering law studies and a required subject in the school curriculum. During the following decades, together with French (and later Italian and German), English gradually gained more space in the educational sphere, eventually replacing Greek and Latin in the curriculum.

The importance of modern foreign languages (including English) in educational policy in Brazil seemed to have been maintained in the first half of the 1900s – even if such presence did not translate into practices that were considered successful. However, with the establishment of the military dictatorship in the country in 1964 (which lasted until 1985), foreign languages, together with other subjects in the humanities, lost ground in the national curriculum (Bohn, 2003). This loss was mainly caused by the nationalist agenda of the military government, which emphasized blind patriotism and allegiance to its enforced ideals. The disregard for foreign languages in the national school curriculum did not translate into a lack of interest in foreign language education by Brazilian scholars. In fact, in the 1960s and 1970s a number of important moments for language teaching-learning took place in the country. These included the founding of the Center for Applied Linguistics at Instituto de Idiomas Yázigi (a private language school), the creation of the first Brazilian graduate program in applied linguistics and language education (at Pontifícia Universidade Católica-SP), the establishment of national associations – including the Brazilian Association for University Professors of English (*Associação Brasileira de Professores Universitários de Inglês*) – and the publication/translation of a number of books in the fields of linguistics and applied linguistics (Ribeiro & Abdalla, 2007; Gomes de Matos, 2012). In addition, a number of private

The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of World Englishes. First Edition. Edited by Kingsley Bolton.

DOI: 10.1002/9781119518297.eowe00301

language institutes began to mushroom in the country in the 1970s, a fact that lasted at least until the early 2010s (Friedrich, 2001; Bohn, 2003; Diniz de Figueiredo, 2017). Many of these institutes focused particularly on the teaching of English as a foreign language, given the growing importance the language had gained geopolitically with the establishment of the United States as a major sociocultural, economic, and military power in the twentieth century. According to Finardi (2014), among others, this abundant offer of English courses in private language institutes in Brazil created a social gap whereby only the privileged ones who could afford to pay for private courses could learn the language well.

In the 1990s, the creation of the Brazilian Association of Applied Linguistics (*Associação de Linguística Aplicada do Brasil*) and the passing of the then new Bill of Directions and Foundations of Education (*Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional*) – in 1996, more specifically – gave more prominence to foreign language teaching-learning, which became part of the national curriculum once again. English then gained even more importance in the Brazilian educational landscape, in both the public and the private sector (Bohn, 2003). Therefore, since the 1970s English has grown into a major commodity in Brazil, resulting in the construction of a love-hate relationship of Brazilians toward the language (Rajagopalan, 2003; Jordão, 2004). English is often associated with empowerment and mobility (Diniz de Figueiredo, 2017), and also, at the same time, with marginalization, Americanization, and neoliberal views of education, which results in the ambivalent feelings discussed by Rajagopalan (2003). In recent years, English has also played an important role in the establishment of bilingual education in regular schools – the equivalent to K-12 in many contexts – and of internationalization policies, programs, and practices in higher education (Finardi, 2016; Liberali & Megale, 2016; Guimarães et al., 2020). These endeavors have highlighted the importance of the language in the Brazilian and international scenarios; yet they have also underscored the hegemony of English and the suspicion with which the language is often perceived in many contexts within Brazil. Such suspicion has been enhanced by the recent passing (in 2017) of the National Common Core Curriculum (*Base Nacional Comum Curricular*), which has made English the de facto and official foreign language in Brazilian education, in detriment of Spanish and other foreign languages.

This brief historical introduction serves to illustrate how English has been present in the linguistic realities and imaginary of Brazil for over 200 years. Historical and geopolitical factors have been, as expected, central to how this language has been conceptualized, taught, and appropriated during this time (note that the word "appropriated" here is used in a positive sense, with the meaning of "taking ownership," rather than being understood negatively, as in "misappropriation"). However, for one to understand some of the important particularities involved in the spread and conception of English in Brazil, a more detailed account of its presence in different sociocultural and educational dimensions is crucial. This entry presents a closer look at a few of these dimensions, paying particular attention to the practices and symbolic meanings that are generally associated with the language in each one of them. Therefore, it approaches the subject of English in Brazil with a conceptual look at the ways in which the language is manifested, appropriated, welcomed, resisted, and contested in different domains within the country. These domains – which serve as the subsections of the entry – are the following: English and language education policies in schools; English and internationalization in higher education; Englishes in the media; and Brazilian Englishes.

2 English language education policies in schools

Despite the common belief that Brazil is a monolingual country, it is in fact a multilingual one with several immigrant and indigenous languages spread out in many communities where Portuguese is not the dominant language (though it is the only official language according to the Brazilian Constitution, promulgated in 1988). With a population of over 210 million people, Brazil is the only Portuguese-speaking country in the Americas, surrounded by Spanish speakers and impacted by internal and external pressures to learn English as an international language.

In linguistically diverse, rich contexts such as this, conflicts are bound to exist, thus requiring some sort of intervention in the form of language policies (Grin, 2003). Leffa (2013) reminds one that Brazilians have to struggle against the possibility of linguistic isolation in a country where only one language has the status of official language and where citizens face many challenges to learn other languages, be they indigenous heritage languages such as Guarani, other foreign languages such as Italian, French, German, or Japanese, the languages of neighboring countries (mainly Spanish), or the most widely spoken language in the world (English) (Finardi, 2017; Peres et al., 2020). Notwithstanding such complexity, the formal study of language policies in Brazil is a recent phenomenon which bears close relationships with the role of English in the country, especially after the new Bill of Directions and Foundations of Education in 1996 and the National Common Core Curriculum in 2017. Hence, discussions on English and national language policies have centered mostly around language education (with the exception of debates regarding a law that sought to end the use of loanwords in Brazilian Portuguese, which will be discussed in another subsection).

The Bill from 1996 (and the subsequent publication of national curricular guidelines), in particular, initiated discussions on how to best turn policy into practice, for there was no guarantee of learning foreign languages in regular schools. In the specific case of English, Finardi (2014) suggests that while private language institutes (where the language had been taught for a number of decades) conceived it as an international language for social communication and mobility, regular school contexts (especially public schools) viewed English as a foreign language; that is, a language that did not and could not belong to students (Diniz de Figueiredo, 2017). Menezes de Souza (2019) brings a somewhat different view in that regard. For him, policies that were developed and implemented for the teaching of foreign languages in school contexts after the Bill made a specific, intentional distinction between English as a subject in regular schools – where the language is taught as "a means to understanding and respecting difference" – and English as a language to be learned for "native-like" competence in private language institutes (Menezes de Souza, 2019, p. 24). In spite of different views regarding the role of English in regular school education after the Bill, there seems to be agreement that there were a number of challenges to be addressed in English language teaching-learning in the country.

The passing of the new National Common Core Curriculum in 2017 was no different and resulted in major discussions over how to address this challenge related to the (mis)match of policy and practice, particularly in relation to English. The new policy introduced by the curriculum made the offer of English mandatory in education, which was not the case until then. Before that, one foreign language had to be offered from fifth grade onwards, and each school community could select the language to be taught based on their own needs. Although the choice was usually English, making it difficult

to include other foreign languages in Brazilian curricula, there was room for other languages, at least insomuch as policy went. After the passing of the curriculum, however, the offer of other languages besides English became practically non-existent. This led to mixed feelings toward the teaching of English, and to accusations that stressed the hegemonic status of the language in displacing other foreign languages and jeopardizing minority languages in the Brazilian educational context.

Another issue that has received much attention in regards to the curriculum is that of the usage of the term "English as a lingua franca" in the document. Duboc (2019), in particular, highlights that there is an epistemological conflict between the fluid, situated nature of English as a lingua franca – as understood in international and Brazilian scholarship (Jenkins, 2015; Gimenez et al., 2018; Duboc & Siqueira, 2020) – and the normative, standardized way in which the term is conceived in the curriculum. Thus, whereas the inclusion of the term "English as a lingua franca" in the curriculum may be seen as an advancement in terms of language policy (especially because it seems to bring an understanding of the current status of English on an international level), its actual conceptualization still seems to be based on traditional conceptions of language and language education. Therefore, while the Bill of Directions and Foundations of Education and its subsequent documents in the late 1990s and early 2000s brought some optimism in terms of language education in regular schools, especially because foreign languages gained space in the national curriculum, the establishment of the curriculum in 2017 jeopardized possibilities for multilingualism by placing English as the only mandatory foreign language in schools (Finardi, 2017). Also, despite the effort toward some linguistic diversity evidenced in the use of the term "English as a lingua franca," such effort seems to have been weakened by the conceptualization of English in a normative, singular (rather than pluralistic) way.

Thus far, this entry has mainly focused on language policies for regular education, which, as stated earlier, have been at the center of policy discussions in regards to English and other foreign languages in Brazil. The role of English in higher education and in the process of internationalization of higher education, which has also gained attention, especially in recent years, will be discussed next.

3 English and the internationalization of higher education

The increasing use of English as an academic lingua franca (Jenkins, 2013) has been deeply intertwined with the view and practice of internationalization of higher education in Brazil. Thus, the recent push for Brazilian universities to internationalize – through programs such as Science without Borders, English without Borders, and later Languages without Borders, for instance – has led to an increase in the demand for English in a number of dimensions of higher education in the country (Martinez, 2016).

In brief, Science without Borders was a program established by the federal government in 2011 (which lasted until 2017) to send over 100,000 (mostly undergraduate) students from Brazil to foreign higher education institutions (mostly in Europe and the US) for periods of up to one year. The program was followed by English without Borders, in 2012, which sought to improve general levels of English language proficiency of Science without Borders candidates, enabling them for the international internship. The fact that this latter program focused exclusively on English was taken by many

as evidence of the higher status that is attributed to this language in detriment of others within the context of Brazilian higher education (Finardi & Archanjo, 2018). English without Borders was later followed by Languages without Borders, in 2014, which ended up bringing more plurality to the program, opportunities in terms of teacher education, and more visibility to other languages and to issues of language policy. Still, even in the context of Languages without Borders, English was often positioned within a conflict between discourses of monolingualism, imperialism, and "native-speakerism," on the one hand, and those of policentricity, contingency, negotiation of meaning, and intelligibility, on the other (Gimenez & Passoni, 2016).

The special status attributed to English permeates internationalization of higher education as a whole. One of the most cited definitions of internationalization of higher education in Brazil is that of Knight (2003), who sees internationalization as "the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education" (Knight, 2003, p. 2). However, as pointed out by critical scholars in the country (such as Jordão and Martinez), the "international" and "global" aspects of internationalization of higher education are usually understood as relating to one language only, English, just as internationalization is often conceived as another word for "commodification of education" (Jordão & Martinez, 2021). An example in that regard has been presented by Diniz de Figueiredo et al.'s (2021) study of English and internationalization of higher education in one particular institution. As shown by the authors, it is often the case that foreign languages other than English are more common in some university contexts (for instance, specific programs), yet English is still most desired in these contexts, mainly because of its association with academia and with possibilities that are imagined by students and professors for their professional futures. The following quote sums up what the authors found:

> [W]hile the use of other languages (including Portuguese) in the process of internationalization needs to be justified by 'real' relationships that are constituted in the programs [that were investigated], the use of English seems to be justified on its own – due to relationships that the participants and their programs intend to establish or foresee establishing. (Diniz de Figueiredo et al., 2021, p. 20)

It is important to note that these (and other) scholars are not questioning the importance of English for higher education and internationalization, but they are being critical of the naturalization of the association between internationalization of higher education and English, and of the English-only (or English-mostly) aspect that seems to dominate internationalization discourses. This association is not exclusive to Brazil. In fact, scholars from other parts of the globe have called for a critical reflection of internationalization of higher education in a current scenario where international education is seen and enacted as a Westernized, tradeable commodity dominated by Anglo-Saxon and English-speaking countries (Jones & De Wit, 2012; De Wit, 2020). Within this scenario, universities in Brazil are increasingly adopting rankings and English-medium instruction as a strategy to internationalize and participate in global conversations – a strategy that has also been adopted by institutions in other parts of the world, particularly those from the Global South (Martinez, 2016; Finardi & Guimarães, 2017; Taquini et al., 2017; Finardi, 2019a; Chiappa & Finardi, 2021).

The offer of English-medium instruction courses, in particular, has become a simplification for the way internationalization of higher education is supposedly

implemented in Brazilian institutions, despite the fact that most international students coming to Brazilian universities are from Spanish- or Portuguese-speaking countries in Latin America and Africa (Finardi et al., 2019). Martinez (2016) and Guimarães and Kremer (2020), for instance, have reported a considerable increase in the offer of English-medium instruction courses in Brazil in the 2010s. Guimarães and Kremer explain this increase in terms of the motivation of Brazilian universities to internationalize in that period. Martinez, in turn, has called attention to the fact that many English-medium instruction initiatives end up taking place without the backup of institutional policies or support. Still, Martinez and others do see possible benefits of English-medium instruction, especially in terms of professional development (not only for language teachers, but for professors as a whole) and local language initiatives.

In sum, the adoption of English in higher education and in the process of internationalization of higher education in Brazil has had some positive results, mainly regarding language policies, teacher education, and the visibility that languages and language professionals have gained within this context (Finardi et al., 2016). However, the association of English with internationalization of higher education has been questioned on the grounds that: (i) English may represent a form of neocolonialism (Leal & Moraes, 2018); (ii) it may jeopardize multilingual approaches when adopted in uncritical ways (Backus et al., 2013); and (iii) the utilitarian view of English as the sole vehicular language in academia goes against the notion of languages as situated social phenomena that must be negotiated and that are inherently variable and hybrid (Canagarajah, 2013). That is why scholars such as Finardi (2019b), Diniz de Figueiredo et al. (2021), among others, have argued in favor of multi/pluri/translingual approaches in internationalization initiatives within higher education, which may better help promote interculturality and inclusiveness in that arena. Such approaches are understood in the world Englishes context as "intentional instructional strategies that integrate two or more languages and aim at the development of the multilingual repertoire as well as metalinguistic and language awareness" in ways that value the semiotic resources of learners (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020, p. 300).

4 Englishes in the media

A considerable amount of research on world Englishes in the media has focused on advertising discourses, including brand naming (Martin, 2020). Two of the pioneering and most influential studies looking at such phenomena in Brazil were conducted by Thonus (1991) and Friedrich (2002). Thonus's data consisted of over 47,000 listings of business names in Yellow Page books for seven Brazilian cities, as well as on-site observations of other such names. She found that businesses with Englishized names "seek to present themselves as selling goods and services which are different and worthwhile" (Thonus, 1991, p. 73). Thus, the idea behind naming businesses using English words (or words that sound like English), according to Thonus, is related to the association of this language with modern/fashionable products of good quality.

Friedrich (2002) found similar results, yet she investigated the notion of linguistic creativity in naming processes more closely. For Friedrich, the choice of English terms (as well as those from other languages, including indigenous ones) expresses local creativity and gives advertisers and those naming their brands more possibilities of combining different terms in ways that go beyond traditional language boundaries

(for a recent discussion on the issue, see Friedrich, 2019). The creativity argument made by Friedrich (2002) was particularly important given the historical moment in which her study was conducted. At the end of the 1990s, Brazilian congressman Aldo Rebelo attempted to pass a bill (Projected Law #1676/1999) prohibiting the use of "foreignisms" in public discourses within Brazil, which included those of advertising. The bill has not moved forward for approval since 2008 (according to the website of the Brazilian Congress), but it did start a national debate sparking media attention around the relation between languages and Brazilian identity (Rajagopalan, 2003, 2005; Diniz de Figueiredo, 2014). Studies such as the one by Friedrich (2002), therefore, were important to explore the supposed "imminent threat" that Brazilian Portuguese was "suffering" with the use of foreignisms. As defended by Friedrich: "Instead of forbidding borrowings in fields such as advertising, policy-makers should look at ways in which people can be prepared for their encounter with this phenomenon" (Friedrich, 2002, p. 28). This view was shared by many Brazilian linguists and applied linguists, some of whom based their arguments on attitudinal studies (Assis-Peterson, 2008).

Another aspect of English and media discourses that has received much attention is that of pop music (Martin, 2020). Before discussing such relation within Brazilian contexts more specifically, it is important to highlight the distinction, in Brazil, between what is understood as *cultura popular* ('popular culture') and *cultura pop* ('pop culture'), especially since this distinction is not made in other contexts. As explained by Diniz de Figueiredo (2015), the former refers to "the cultures of the margins, manifested in community gatherings that generally take place on the street and other collective spaces, rather than on a stage," while the latter "refers to the types of culture that are made for consumption and that are mainstreamed by the mass media" (Diniz de Figueiredo, 2015, p. 459).

This distinction is relevant here because it plays an important part in the understanding of how the relation between Brazilian music and English has been constructed. According to Paiva (2005), for instance, samba artists have shown a generally negative attitude toward English, even when they themselves adopt terms from the language in their lyrics (in which case the adoption of English is used to mock the use of the language as a whole in Brazil). It is arguable that such an attitude has reflected the understanding of samba as a Brazilian tradition, that is, as belonging to the realm of *cultura popular*, at the margins, even when it is mainstreamed by the media.

Other types of music and musical movements (such as Brazilian hip hop, Manguebeat, and Tropicália), on the other hand, have appropriated English and played with it in ways that make it possible to re-signify what is understood as Brazilian, especially in face of a growth of influences coming from other parts of the globe (Diniz de Figueiredo, 2015; Montes, 2016; Fabricio & Moita Lopes, 2019). Therefore, what seems to be at stake in the way English relates to music in Brazil is a sense of identity within the country. While in more traditional types of music (like samba), English seems to be denied (due to its non-Brazilianess), in others, it ends up playing an important part in the understanding of how Brazilians (especially Brazilian youth) have engaged with symbolic phenomena from around the world.

One final aspect this entry addresses in terms of English in the media is that of digital Englishes (Friedrich & Diniz de Figueiredo, 2016; Friedrich, 2020b). An important factor in terms of language use online is that it brings new possibilities of text and identity construction, as well as new forms of relating with others (Gee & Hayes, 2011). Studies on the digital ways in which English has been used in Brazil have thus highlighted

a number of issues that seem noteworthy. These include: the construction of blogger, gamer, and other types of identity through the appropriation and adaptation of English terms (Diniz de Figueiredo, 2010); the issue of correctness in online genres, especially amidst polarized discourses (Vasconcelos & Siqueira, 2021); and the use of English for humorous purposes, in ways that challenge the very idea of English as a necessary international language (Diniz de Figueiredo, 2023). Studies such as the ones cited here have also shed light on the idea of English as a semiotic resource that is combined with many others in a number of multimodal ways, both on the Web and in other realms (Blommaert, 2010; Kress, 2010). This notion, as well as the fruitfulness of investigating online discourses, highlights the importance of looking into digital Englishes more closely in future studies (in Brazil and other contexts).

5 Brazilian Englishes

It has been common for studies over the years to address the ways in which Brazilians speak English, mainly in regards to pronunciation, and with pedagogical goals (Major, 1986; Brawerman-Albini & Gomes, 2014). However, as stated by Friedrich (2020a), there do not seem to be particular English varieties that have been developed in Brazil or in other South American countries for that matter. Still, as defended by Rajagopalan (2010), Englishes in Expanding Circle contexts (including Brazil) have been going through similar processes to the ones previously experienced in the Outer Circle. For Rajagopalan, it is just a matter of time before people in the Expanding Circle make English their own on a broader scale – which may include developing their own lexical and phonological ways of using the language. Some scholars in Brazil have defended the need for corpus-based studies that seek to understand the peculiar ways in which Brazilians have appropriated English in a number of situations. Bordini and Gimenez (2014), for example, have made the case that studies investigating interactions involving Brazilians and speakers of other languages communicating in English could help one understand regularities in how Brazilians speak the language – which, in turn, could be of much pedagogical value.

In light of the above considerations, Almeida and Porfirio (2020) mapped out corpus-based research on Englishes in Brazil. The authors found only a few studies of such kind, most of which have a "native-speaker" orientation for classroom purposes – which shows that Friedrich's (2000) assertion that English in Brazil is taught mostly based on "native-speaker" norms still holds true. Almeida and Porfirio go on to defend the need for the development of broad-scope corpora, with data from interactions in English within Brazil. The authors then state that one such corpus (Brazilian Corpus of English) is currently under development, under the coordination of Porfirio herself.

It is still early to speculate about the possible results of such an endeavor (which, according to Almeida and Porfirio, started out in 2017). Nevertheless, the project seems to have potential in pedagogical, sociolinguistic, and intercultural terms. One possible affordance, for instance, is the possibility of discussing with future students the ways in which English has been linguistically appropriated and changed within Brazil, and how these transformations have reflected local values, tensions, desires, and so on. Still, following Friedrich and Matsuda (2010), Jordão (2014), Canagarajah (2014), and

others, the authors of this entry find it important to argue that such corpora need to be used not as a definitive pedagogical variety of English to be taught in classrooms, but more for the promotion of linguistic and intercultural awareness in classes that value the teaching of English based on local needs and on notions such as intelligibility, negotiation of meanings, and situatedness.

6 Conclusion

Before concluding this entry on English in Brazil, there are a few issues that must still be addressed. The main one is the fact that the relation between how English is conceived in the country has (as expected but sometimes overlooked) accompanied major political scenarios, changes, and dilemmas that Brazil has faced throughout its history. This includes Brazil's past of colonization, its still colonial present (see Mignolo, 2000, for a difference between colonization and colonialism), the period of dictatorship in the 1960s–1980s, its recent redemocratization and struggles with democracy, and the current polarization that has dominated Brazilian politics – especially since the impeachment of former president Dilma Rousseff and the election of extreme right-wing president, Jair Bolsonaro, in 2018. As of the writing of this text, the country has suffered from continuous attacks on public education and public health by Bolsonaro, even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The past, the present, and the future of English in the country (especially, one could claim, in regards to the educational realm and language policies) are deeply entangled with this history, and must be understood with such entanglement in mind. It is not surprising, therefore, that scholars in fields such as world Englishes, English as a lingua franca, and language education in Brazil have stressed the importance of discussing the politics of English within sociocultural and educational contexts in the country. In fact, discussions on race, gender, social class, sexuality, decolonization in education, national identity, border epistemologies, situated sociocultural teaching and learning, and related matters have been at the center of the work of many scholars working on English in Brazil, such as Moita Lopes (2003), Monte Mor (2007), Ferreira (2015), and Menezes de Souza (2019). Finally, the authors acknowledge that this account of English in Brazil is permeated by their own ways of living with this language throughout their personal and professional lives and their own loci of enunciation. Accounts are invited from other scholars to shed light upon a number of issues not addressed here, so as to paint a more encompassing picture of this polycentric language in such a diverse country.

Acknowledgments

Kyria Finardi would like to thank the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) for the research grant which contributed a number of findings to this entry. Acknowledgment is also due to the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa e Inovação do Espírito Santo (FAPES) for research support (both authors, Protocol 50686.788.17817.01082022).

SEE ALSO: Central America, English and Creoles in; Central and South America, English Language Teaching in; Central and South America, The History of English in

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