

'How to (not) win friends and (not) influence people' Linguistic politeness in European Portuguese at the crossroads between fixity and performativity.

Rita Faria

rita.faria@ucp.pt

CECC – UCP

Jesus tratou a procuradora por "você". Porque é que não deve fazê-lo?

"O tribunal pauta-se por alguma **formalidade**, que permite que os julgamentos decorram com maior serenidade" (...). ... o facto de haver um **protocolo** a cumprir - como a forma de tratamento ou o uso das becas (...) - ajuda a 'controlar alguma animosidade' que possa existir."



IM/POLITENESS IN EP

The shaping of interpersonal relationships through language:

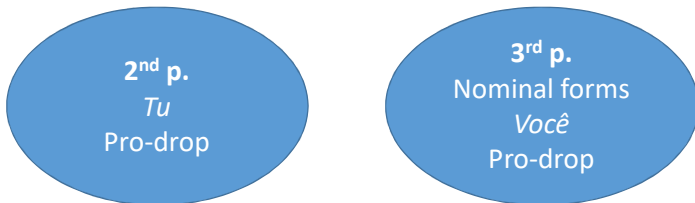
"PROTOCOL" – MORAL ORDER

- "the **perceived order of linguistic** and non-linguistic **behaviour** both in first-time encounters and in pre-existing **interpersonal relationships**" (Kádár 2017:5).

"FORM" – DISCERNMENT POLITENESS/*wakimae*:

- "The choice of linguistic forms or expressions in which the **distinction between the ranks or the roles of the speaker, the referent and the addressee are systematically encoded** (...)." (Ide 1989:230)
- '**conforming to the expected norm**'. (...) ... once certain factors of the addressee and the situation are noted, **the selection of an appropriate linguistic form or behaviour are essentially automatic.**" (Hill et al. 1986: 348)

FORMS OF ADDRESS IN EP:



DISCERNMENT + FIXITY

vs

VOLITION + PERFORMATIVITY/FLUIDITY

POLITENESS 1 – EMIC: Mixed-method approach 1st-order metalanguage:

- Ethnographic/diary**
Metaphors of address – [A Revolução de 1974] *foi tratar os outros por tu*. (MP José Soeiro's 25th April Parliament speech, 2022, 06:28)



- Collection of media bites** – articles, comments, translation of address in the press, on TV fiction

- Datasets:**
Cinema (Portuguese film)
Reddit (14 threads, 270 comments)

POLITENESS 2 – ETIC:

- ... some speakers consider **você** offensive (Oliveira 1994)
- [*Você*] **provoque des tensions** chez des allocutaires **d'âge moyen ou avancé ou chez des allocutaires de couches sociales plutôt élevées**. (Carreira 2003)
- Você*: ... its use in Standard Portuguese is **very peculiar to certain relationships** which are completely symmetrical and friendly; it is **unacceptable** in most other cases, especially whenever there is a social difference or age difference amongst participants (Duarte 2011)
- [*Você*] is used as a form of endearment or intimacy only **among higher social ranks**. ... **it is not possible to use** from inferior to superior in age, social class or hierarchy. (Cunha & Cintra 1994)
- There is no consensus** as to the use of *você* and to the social variables which govern it. (Gouveia 2008)

CINEMA:

O Pátio das Cantigas (1942 – 2015)

O Leão da Estrela (1947-2015)



General observations so far:

- Progression of solidarity forms** such as *tu* between equals (*tu* has extrapolated from restricted family + friends circles – e.g., colleagues).
- Expansion of *você***, accepted between **mutually unfamiliar participants** and occasionally **from inferior to superior** (Anastácio to FC President; students to teachers).
- Você* seems to carry no stigma and **bears no connotations of impoliteness**.

REDDIT:

VOCÊ

RUDENESS/IMPOLITENESS

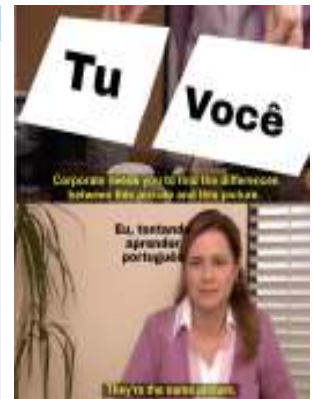
- you will come off as impolite, rude and even aggressive
- it's better to avoid it
- Você** is polite for dummies

DEMOGRAPHICS (REGION/AGE)

- ... considered rude in Lisbon
- Eu uso **você** quando sinto necessidade de demonstrar algum respeito, normalmente derivado à idade. Trato os meus avós por **você**

FORMAL/RESPECT + DISTANCE:

- Since when is **Você** is rude?
- Geralmente uso **você** para pessoas mais velhas que eu e com figuras mais autoritárias tipo polícia, médicos, etc.
- Você** deve ser usado em situações formais, no entanto a maioria dos portugueses evitam usá-lo porque pode lembrar-lhe à outra pessoa que ela é mais velha
- Tu** is informal, **você** is formal



TU

Tu is informal
Tu - People you know or close to your age/social status never risk a "tu" before you hear one.

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