

BRITISH VS. AMERICAN ENGLISH, BRAZILIAN VS. EUROPEAN PORTUGUESE: how close or how far apart? – a corpus-driven study

1. Introduction

We have often been asked if the difference between Brazilian and European Portuguese is actually significant. In all instances it was hypothesized that the difference is much more striking than between British and American English. This study takes a corpus-driven approach and investigates the issue in a particular genre, namely cooking recipes, based on the assumption that it will reveal lexical and syntactic differences that are also prevalent in the general language. It should also reveal textual differences inherent to the genre under study. For that purpose, we have built a comparable corpus consisting of recipes in all four language varieties. The preliminary results have confirmed our hypothesis at all levels: lexical, syntactic and textual.

2. The problem

This study actually derives from a very concrete situation in Brazil: European Portuguese cookbooks are sold in bookstores as if they were Brazilian. In other words, there is no warning to the innocent consumer that s/he may encounter serious comprehension problems when trying to put into practice one of the recipes inside.

It seems that cooking has become fashionable to the point that an astonishing number of translations appear in a variety of publications, from cookbooks, food labels, magazines, cooking sites, and TV programs to newspapers, novels, and even corporate bulletins.

However, the translation of culinary texts does not enjoy the respect it deserves. People seem to be unaware of the fact that it is a specialized field and as such requires a translator with specialized knowledge. Besides, the content of the field branches out into other highly technical areas such as Nutrition, Agriculture, Anthropology, and Chemistry.

Not only is the field specialized, it is also culture-bound. But again, this seems to be ignored even by cooking dictionaries in Portuguese for they list terms from both the Brazilian and European variants without any mention to which variant they belong:

<p>Alourar. Dar aos alimentos um cor dourada, tostando-os no fogo ou no forno, inclusive pincelando-os previamente com uma gema (no caso de massa). Corar. Alperche. Tipo de damasco grande, com cheiro semelhante ao do pêssego. (Fornari 2001)</p>
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The picture is quite different as regards British and American English as most dictionaries – even general language dictionaries, especially British ones – identify terms that differ across these variants:

<p>aubergine. An aubergine is a vegetable with a smooth, dark purple skin and soft, white flesh; used especially in British English. = eggplant. (Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary, 1987).</p>

<p>eggplant noun [count or uncount] AMERICAN an AUBERGINE aubergine noun [count or uncount] BRITISH a vegetable with a smooth dark purple skin and white flesh. American eggplant (Macmillan English Dictionary, 2002).</p>

3. Contrastive Studies

Many scholars have studied different contrastive aspects of British and American English (Johansson 1979, 1980; Lindquist 1997, 1998, to name a few), but very little has been done contrasting Brazilian and European Portuguese.

Wittman, Pêgo & Santos (1995:85) comment that there are only two dictionaries that highlight the contrasts between these two variants: Vilar's (1989) *Dicionário contrastivo luso-brasileiro* and Mário Prata's (1993) humorous *Schifaiçfavoire. Dicionário de Português*. The authors also mention Biderman's work (1994) but point out that it is not based on comparable corpora. Nevertheless, other works by the author (Biderman 1992, 1996), which analyze the applicability of the Portuguese *index verborum* created by a team from the University of Lisbon in 1984 to Brazilian Portuguese, reveal that among the many contrasting food-related words she points out, many have also been disclosed in our study.

To test our hypothesis that American and British English are lexically closer than Brazilian and European Portuguese we have built a comparable corpus of cooking recipes in all four variants.

To make recipes as comparable as possible we selected only those that had distinct sections for the ingredients and the preparation, used good grammar and spelling, and were written in everyday language (which excluded recipes by chefs, as they tend to use a more idiosyncratic vocabulary). For this study, diet, vegan and ethnic recipes were left out. All recipes were collected from the WWW.

To ensure lexical variety in terms of ingredients and cooking processes we selected 10 recipes in every variant for each one of the following categories:

Appetizers	Entrées: fish	Desserts
Soups	Entrées: pasta	Cakes and Pies
Entrées: meat	Side dishes	Bread
Entrées: poultry	Salads	

Each recipe was identified with a header indicating title of recipe, language, and publication data (publisher, editor, publication place etc.).

However, the construction of the corpus was not without problems. To begin with, there are many more American (AE) sites than Brazilian (BP), British (BE) or European Portuguese (EP), in that order. Besides being very few in number, European Portuguese sites presented other problems: a) many recipes did not separate the ingredients from the preparation, b) there was a large number of ethnic recipes.

We relied mostly on extensions such as .br, .pt, and .uk to identify provenance. But this did not work for American English and it was often difficult to trace the nationality of a recipe in an .org or .com site, for example. So, at times we had to resort to known lexical differences such as aubergine/eggplant to distinguish between BE and AE. Another problem was distinguishing original recipes from translations, as we only wanted to include originals. After various methodologically failed attempts to collect comparable recipes across all four variants, the successful method was to sketch a plan of the recipes for each category and then collect one recipe at a time, starting with BP and then trying to find its equivalent in EP, BE and AE.

This procedure already brought to the fore some interesting cultural differences. The category in which this seems to be most evident is *side dishes*: whereas in BP *rice and beans* are most frequent, in AE we found *baked beans*, but in EP and BE *potatoes* prevailed. While in EP we have *migas* [seasoned and moistened bread crumbs], in BP we have *farofa* [seasoned manioc flour] and apparently no equivalents in BE or AE.

Bread recipes are hardly found in EP sites – does that mean that bread is not made at home? On the other hand, many AE bread recipes only list the ingredients – for the processing part they rely on breadmachines! When there is an explanation, however, it tends to be quite detailed.

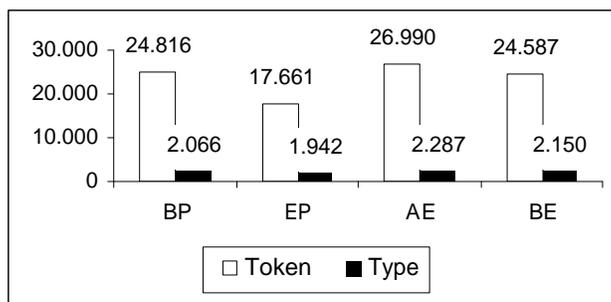
Within the meat category, we noticed that not only do meat cuts differ across cultures but, sometimes, even the names of certain fowl. For example, a Brazilian *galeto* could be any of (rock) cornish (game) hens; spring chicken, baby chicken, broiler-fryer etc.

Born and raised in Brazil, where there is a large Italian colony, we found it quite surprising that there were so few pasta recipes in EP. Apart from that, the various spellings for the different kinds of noodles also posed a problem for finding equivalent recipes.

Even something as prosaic as *chicken soup*, which one would expect to find in all four variants, proved to be distinct: BP *canja* and AE *chicken soup* are hardly alike, in that rice is a must in the Brazilian recipe.

Other problems had to do with categorization: should *muffins* go into the bread category (as they probably would in AE) or into the cake category (a more reasonable solution from the BP perspective)? And what about pizza? Is it a snack (for which no category was provided in this first version) or a main dish (as it is a traditional Sunday dinner meal in some parts of Brazil)?

Our current version of the corpus has the following distribution:



It can be seen from the above that the EP subcorpus is significantly smaller than the other three. The number of recipes is nevertheless the same; the difference lies in their size: they are more concise, which accounts for a higher type/token ratio. In other words, there is less repetition.

4. Exploiting the corpus

We used Wordsmith Tools v.3 (Scott, 1999) for querying the corpus. Starting with 48 wordlists – one for every category of each language variant plus 4 wordlists for the total of each – we were able to build various key word lists which allowed for a wide variety of comparisons. First we compared one category with the total corpus, which gave us the key words for that category in that variant:

N	WORD	FREQ.	PPMIOA.LST %	FREQ.	TOTIOA.LST %	KEYNESS	P
1	TOMATOES	19	0,70	34	0,13	28,4	0,000000
2	PASTA	18	0,66	31	0,11	27,8	0,000000
3	SAUCE	30	1,11	94	0,35	24,6	0,000001
4	CHEESE	28	1,03	84	0,31	24,3	0,000001

Figure 1: AE Pasta vs. AE Total

The second step was comparing a category in one variant with the total corpus of the other one. The chart below, for example, shows only the words that have a statistically significant difference in frequency across both Portuguese variants. Thus it gives us both the keywords for the category *Bread* in EP (*fermento, farinha, pão*), and the variant's specific vocabulary (*levedar, cozer, ch., q.b.*):

N	WORD	FREQ.	PAOPOP.LST %	FREQ.	TOTPOB.LST %	KEYNESS	P
1	SE	51	3,39	90	0,36	119,3	0,000000
2	LEVEDAR	9	0,60	0		51,6	0,000000
3	PADEIRO	7	0,47	0		40,1	0,000000
4	COZER	7	0,47	0		40,1	0,000000
5	CH	7	0,47	0		40,1	0,000000
6	FARINHA	30	1,99	122	0,49	35,4	0,000000
7	B	6	0,40	0			

Figure 2: EP Bread vs. BP Total

The same was done with BE and AE. The chart below shows the BE keywords for the category *Desserts* against the total corpus of AE:

N	WORD	FREQ.	SBRIOB.LST %	FREQ.	TOTIOA.LST %	KEYNESS	P
1	OZ	25	1,34	35	0,13	60,4	0,000000
2	ML	16	0,86	13	0,05	49,6	0,000000
3	PINT	11	0,59	2		49,4	0,000000
4	PUDDING	13	0,70	10	0,04	41,1	0,000000
5	MILK	25	1,34	66	0,24	39,0	0,000000
6	CHOCOLATE	15	0,80	19	0,07	38,1	0,000000
7	CORNFLOUR	6	0,32	0		32,9	0,000000
8	CASTER	5	0,27	0		27,4	0,000000
9	SUGAR	26	1,39	101	0,37	27,3	0,000000

Figure 3: BE Desserts vs. AE Total

4.1 BP vs. EP

When we compared the total corpus of each pair of variants with each other we arrived at quite revealing results. However, due to lack of space we will report mainly on “absolute contrasts” (Wittman, Pêgo & Santos 1995:9), that is, words or phrases that occur in one variant but have a zero occurrence in the other one. The comparison between EP and BP yielded 30 positive keywords and 23 negative keywords. This means, 30 words which are peculiar to EP and 23 to BP:

N	WORD	FREQ.	TOTPOP.LST %	FREQ.	TOTPOB.LST %	KEYNESS	P
1	SE	385	2,18	90	0,36	314,8	0,000000
2	LUME	82	0,46	0		144,1	0,000000
3	Q	77	0,44	0		135,3	0,000000
4	B	77	0,44	0		135,3	0,000000
5	PREPARAÇÃO	77	0,44	3	0,01	113,0	0,000000
6	COZER	59	0,33	0		103,7	0,000000
7	DL	57	0,32	0		100,2	0,000000
8	GR	89	0,50	13	0,05	92,6	0,000000
9	NATAS	49	0,28	0		86,1	0,000000
10	SUMO	39	0,22	0		68,5	0,000000
11	GRS	43	0,24	1		67,1	0,000000
12	CONFECÇÃO	37	0,21	0		65,0	0,000000
13	DURANTE	61	0,35	9	0,04	63,1	0,000000
14	S	29	0,16	0		50,9	0,000000
15	DEITE	27	0,15	0		47,4	0,000000
16	JUNTA	23	0,13	0		40,4	0,000000
17	TACHO	21	0,12	0		36,9	0,000000
18	MARGARINA	57	0,32	19	0,08	35,1	0,000000
19	PURÉ	19	0,11	0		33,4	0,000000
20	ARREFECER	19	0,11	0		33,4	0,000000
21	AS	246	1,39	202	0,81	32,5	0,000000
22	BOCADOS	17	0,10	0		29,8	0,000000
23	DEITA	17	0,10	0		29,8	0,000000
24	LHE	17	0,10	0		29,8	0,000000
25	COM	445	2,52	434	1,75	29,8	0,000000
26	COZA	16	0,09	0		28,1	0,000000
27	DEIXA	25	0,14	3	0,01	28,1	0,000000
28	C	40	0,23	12	0,05	27,0	0,000000
29	TAPE	15	0,08	0		26,3	0,000000
30	ALOURAR	14	0,08	0		24,6	0,000001

Figure 4: EP Total vs. BP Total = EP positive keywords

The above chart shows that there are 20 items with zero occurrences in Brazilian Portuguese:

lume	natas	junta	bocados
q.	sumo	tacho	deita
b.	confecção	arrefecer	coza
cozer	s [as in olive(s)]	puré	tape
dl	deite	lhe	alourar

One of them, *puré*, represents a difference in spelling - it takes a circumflex in BP: *purê*. Two items actually go together *q.* and *b.*, making *q.b.* (“quanto basta”), which stands for “to taste” in English, as in “salt to taste”. Looking at the negative keywords,

N	WORD	FREQ.	TOTPOP.LST %	FREQ.	TOTPOB.LST %	KEYNESS	P
31	XÍCARAS	2	0,01	34	0,14	24,6	0,000001
32	XÍCARAS	2	0,01	34	0,14	24,6	0,000001
33	GELADEIRA	0		24	0,10	25,8	0,000000
34	REFOGUE	2	0,01	36	0,15	26,6	0,000000
35	RESERVE	9	0,05	60	0,24	26,9	0,000000
36	OLIVA	0		30	0,12	32,3	0,000000
37	SALSINHA	0		30	0,12	32,3	0,000000
38	COZINHE	6	0,03	58	0,23	33,1	0,000000
39	PORÇÕES	1		38	0,15	33,3	0,000000
40	GOSTO	12	0,07	78	0,31	34,3	0,000000
41	PARA	89	0,50	252	1,02	35,8	0,000000
42	RENDIMENTO	0		35	0,14	37,6	0,000000
43	BAIXO	1		43	0,17	38,5	0,000000
44	ACRESCENTE	9	0,05	81	0,33	44,4	0,000000
45	DO	70	0,40	233	0,94	46,1	0,000000
46	PREPARO	9	0,05	87	0,35	49,7	0,000000
47	POR	77	0,44	262	1,06	53,9	0,000000
48	PANELA	15	0,08	115	0,46	57,1	0,000000
49	SUCO	0		59	0,24	63,5	0,000000
50	CHÁ	21	0,12	156	0,63	75,9	0,000000
51	REINO	0		73	0,29	78,6	0,000000
52	COLOQUE	23	0,13	183	0,74	93,3	0,000000
53	FOGO	6	0,03	135	0,54	106,3	0,000000
54	XÍCARA	0		119	0,48	128,2	0,000000

Figure 5: EP Total vs. BP Total = BP negative keywords

we may come up with possible equivalents for some of the EP nouns above:

lume = *fogo*, “fire”
tacho = *panela*, “pan”
sumo = *suco*, “juice”

confecção = *preparo*, “preparation”
bocados = no equivalent, “pieces”

Using the WS’s Concordance Tool, we took a closer look at the collocations with *lume* (82 occ. in EP and 0 occ. in BP) and *fogo* (6 occ. in EP and 135 occ. in BP) and noticed the following distinctions:

	BP	EP
Fogo baixo	32	0
Fogo brando	8	0
Fogo alto	11	0
Fogo médio	6	0
Lume (muito) brando	0	17
Lume forte	0	4

Whereas *fogo* may collocate with both *baixo* (“low”) and *brando* (“mild”) in BP, there seems to be a clear preference for *baixo* (“low flame”). In EP *lume* only collocates with *brando*. For “high flame” the contrast is also absolute: BP uses *fogo alto* (*alto* = “high”) while EP opts for *lume forte* (*forte* = “strong”).

The distinction between *sumo* and *suco* (“juice”) is also of interest: *sumo* (EP) seems to collocate only with orange (4 occ.) and lemon (25 occ.), while *suco* (BP – 59 occ.) collocates with other fruits too. Could that be related to the fact that Brazil is a tropical country with an abundance of juicy fruits?

The item *dl* (“deciliter”) seems easy to account for:

	BP	EP
Grs	1	43
Gr	13	89
G	73	69
DI	0	57

EP makes use of deciliters, while this measurement is not used at all in BP. Also, although both variants use grams, in various abbreviations (*g*, *gr*, *grs*), they are much more frequent in EP than in BP. The question then arises: how are ingredients usually measured in BP? The occurrences of “cup” in both subcorpora may provide an answer:

	BP	EP
xíc./xícara(s)	155	2 (?)
c./ch./chávena	0	44

This allows us to make some inferences about cultural differences: while EP prefers exact measurements, for which one needs special instruments like scales or measuring cups, BP opts for a more practical way of measuring ingredients, i.e., cups (and spoons). The two instances in which cups appear in EP recipes may reveal a misplaced or “adapted” recipe, an indication that some recipes need to be revised, re-categorized or even excluded from the corpus.

Next we compared the list of verbs in EP: *cozer*, *deite*, *junta*, *arrefecer*, *deita*, *coza*, *tape*, *alourar* with the verbs in the BP list: *refogue*, *reserve*, *cozinhe*, *acrescente*, *coloque*. The differences were immediately apparent. Apart from the lexical contrasts, there were also morphological differences: while all BP verbs occurred in the imperative, in EP they occurred either in the imperative (*deite*, *tape*, *coza*) or in the infinitive (*cozer*, *arrefecer*, *alourar*), or, still, in an impersonal form followed by a passive particle *se* (*junta-se*, *deita-se*). Notice that *se* is the first word in the positive keyword list for EP (385 times vs. 90 in BP):

	BP	EP
Deixa-se	3	25
Deita-se	0	17
Junta(m)-se-(lhe(s))	0	29

The last structure: verb + *se* + indirect object *lhe* is quite peculiar to EP and will not occur in BP.

At the syntactic level, *entretanto* occurs only in EP recipes as an adverb meaning “in the meantime”. BP uses *enquanto isso* in that function as *entretanto* is mostly used as an adversative conjunction.

Figure 5 above shows us 7 zero-occurrence words in EP: *geladeira*, *oliva*, *salsinha*, *rendimento*, *suco*, *reino* (as in *pimenta do reino*), and *xícara*. Although not shown in the chart (with the exception of *sumo*), possible equivalents would be *frigorífico*, *azeite (de oliva)*, *salsa*, *número de pessoas*, *sumo*, *pimenta preta* and *chávena*. It is interesting to notice that while Brazilians make a difference between various vegetable oils (*óleo*) on the one hand and olive oil (*azeite de oliva*) on the other, this distinction would almost be redundant in Portugal, where olive oil is a staple and simply called *azeite*, dispensing with any qualification.

At a textual level, the parts of a recipe have different headings:

	BP	EP
(Modo de) Preparo/ar	75	1
(Modo de) preparação	0	65
Confecção	0	37
Modo de fazer	12	0
Rendimento: # porções	27	0
(Receita) para # pessoas	8	14
Número de pessoas	0	11

4.2 AE vs. BE

The numbers here are quite different – there are 18 keywords for BE out of which only five have zero occurrence in AE: *mins*, *cornflour*, *prawns*, *courgettes*, *teasp*. Notice that two are measurements: *mins* and *teasp*.

N	WORD	FREQ.	TOTIOB.LST %	FREQ.	TOTIOA.LST %	KEYNESS	P
1	THE	1.689	6,86	1.164	4,31	160,3	0,000000
2	OZ	178	0,72	35	0,13	119,0	0,000000
3	TBSP	132	0,54	20	0,07	103,2	0,000000
4	METHOD	61	0,25	3	0,01	70,0	0,000000
5	GAS	47	0,19	3	0,01	50,8	0,000000
6	PINT	42	0,17	2		48,5	0,000000
7	LEAVE	47	0,19	4	0,01	46,8	0,000000
8	MINS	26	0,11	0		38,5	0,000000
9	SERVES	66	0,27	18	0,07	33,8	0,000000
10	CORNFLOUR	21	0,09	0		31,1	0,000000
11	LITTLE	60	0,24	17	0,06	29,6	0,000000
12	MARK	26	0,11	2		26,7	0,000000
13	PRAWNS	18	0,07	0		26,7	0,000000
14	TEASP	17	0,07	0		25,2	0,000001
15	COURGETTES	17	0,07	0		25,2	0,000001
16	FRYING	30	0,12	4	0,01	25,0	0,000001
17	FRY	46	0,19	12	0,04	24,5	0,000001
18	TIN	34	0,14	6	0,02	24,3	0,000001

Figure 6: BE Total vs. AE Total AE = BE positive keywords

Similarly, out of 19 keywords for AE there are only five with zero occurrences in BE: *t*, *ounces*, *tb*, *yield* and *ham*. This time three are measurements: *t*, *ounces*, *tb*.

N	WORD	FREQ.	TOTIOB.LST %	FREQ.	TOTIOA.LST %	KEYNESS	P
19	SHRIMP	1		25	0,09	25,4	0,000000
20	HAM	0		21	0,08	27,2	0,000000
21	SKILLET	4	0,02	38	0,14	28,8	0,000000
22	MEDIUM	29	0,12	93	0,34	29,8	0,000000
23	YIELD	0		24	0,09	31,1	0,000000
24	TABLESPOON	18	0,07	76	0,28	33,4	0,000000
25	POUND	2		37	0,14	35,2	0,000000
26	BROTH	3	0,01	41	0,15	35,7	0,000000
27	TB	0		30	0,11	38,9	0,000000
28	OUNCES	0		32	0,12	41,5	0,000000
29	DEGREES	5	0,02	56	0,21	45,5	0,000000
30	DIRECTIONS	1		42	0,16	46,5	0,000000
31	LET	5	0,02	58	0,21	47,7	0,000000
32	T	0		39	0,14	50,6	0,000000
33	TABLESPOONS	20	0,08	102	0,38	53,1	0,000000
34	SERVINGS	3	0,01	57	0,21	54,6	0,000000
35	TEASPOON	19					

Figure 7: BE Total vs. AE Total = AE positive keywords

Let us take a closer look at the measurement occurrences in both variants:

	AE	BE
Tablespoons	102	20
Tablespoon	76	18
Tbsp	20	132
T	39	0
Teasp	0	17
Teaspoon	19	109

Pound	37	2
Ounces	32	0
Oz	35	178
Cups	118	5
Cup	284	28

There seems to be a clear contrast in relation to measurements and some of their abbreviations. BE prefers the abbreviation *Tbsp* over the full forms *tablespoon(s)*, but never uses the initial *T* as an abbreviation for tablespoon. In contrast, the abbreviation *Teasp* does not occur in AE for *Teaspoon*. What is strange though is that *Teaspoon* occurs 126 times in BE as opposed to only 19 times in AE. Also worthy of notice is the difference in frequency for *ounces*: 32 times in AE but zero in BE, whereas *oz* occurs 35 times in AE and 178 times in BE. This seems to indicate not only a clear preference for the abbreviated form in BE but also for more precise measurements in that variant, which is attested by the difference in occurrence of the “looser” form of measurement – *cup(s)*: 402 times in AE vs. 33 times in BE.

BE’s concern for precise measurements – or at least for making sure all types of measurements are covered – is also attested by the way oven temperatures are indicated (in three distinct ways simultaneously): Celsius, Fahrenheit and gas marks. The latter does not occur in AE.

N	Concordance	Tag	File
22	Method Pre-heat the oven to 425°F/220°C/gas mark 7. Place the peppers and tomatoes in a		\iob\ppp09_~1.txt
23	ubled in size. 5. Preheat the oven to 230C, 450F, Gas mark 8 and grease a loaf tin. Turn the dough		\iob\pao06_~1.txt
24	hrooms 1. Preheat the oven to 240°C (gas mk 9, 475°F). Mix the dough ingredients in a		\iob\aco05_~1.txt
25	ish and sprinkle with cheese. Bake in 180C/350F/Gas 4 oven for 15 minutes or microwave at high (\iob\aco10_~1.txt
26	Method Pre-heat oven to 170 °C / 325 °F / Gas 3. Put the rice in a buttered 1.1 litre (2 pint)		\iob\br03_~1.txt

Figure 8: BE concordance lines for *gas*

Another clear difference concerns certain headings: BE prefers *Serves #*, whereas AE prefers *(Yield/makes): # servings*:

	AE	BE
Servings	57	3
Yield	24	0
Serves	18	66

N	Concordance	Tag	File %
1	nutes. Ready in: approx. 3 Hours . Makes 8 to 10 servings. 1 pound dry Great Northern		\ioa\sop09_~1.txt
2	Cuisine: North America; Course: Salads; Servings: 4 Description: This salad l		9c\ioa\sas04_~1.txt
3	g Custard Egg Custard Serving Size : 4 Preparation Time :1:00 Categ		3 \ioa\sbr09_~1.txt
4	illed, Lamb & Mutton, Meats Rating: **** Yield 4 servings Ingredients 4 large mutton		\ioa\ppc04_~1.txt
5	e: 90 Nutrition Facts Serving Size Number of Servings 6 Calories 570 Calories from Fat 350		\ioa\ppc01_~1.txt

Figure 9: AE concordance lines for *servings*

The preparation of the recipes is identified by *Directions* in AE and *Instructions* in BE:

	AE	BE
Directions	42	1
Instructions	4	28

5. Summary

This preliminary study has already shown that the differences between Brazilian and European Portuguese, based on a comparable corpus of cooking recipes in the four variants, are much more marked than between American and British English. For the purpose of this paper we have mainly analyzed those items that have a zero occurrence in one of the variants. At the lexical level, BP leads the way with 20 zero occurrences as compared to 7 for its EP counterpart. In the English arena, the British and American variants show a tie with 5 zero occurrence items each.

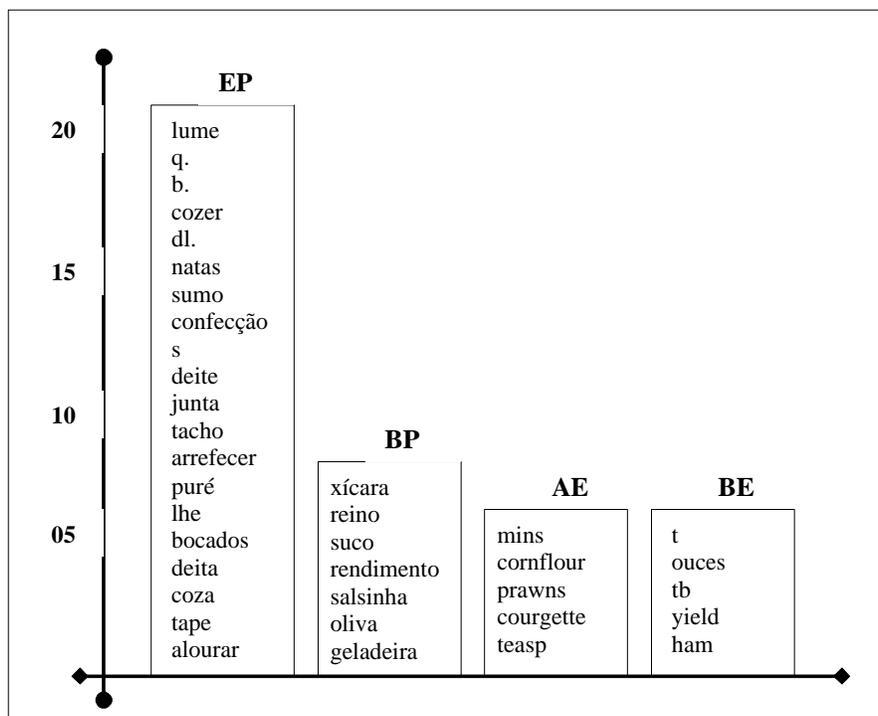


Figure 10: lexical items peculiar to each variant

At the syntactic level there are two major differences between the Portuguese variants: *entretanto*, meaning “in the meantime” only occurs in EP, which also makes extensive use of the impersonal pronoun *se*, hardly ever used in BP in that genre of text. No syntactic contrasts were identified for AE and BE at this stage of our study.

At the textual level, each variant seems to have its preference for naming the processing of a recipe:

BP	EP	AE	BE
Modo de Preparo/ar	Confecção	Directions	Instructions
Modo de Fazer	(Modo de) preparação		

Finally, it was also possible to make some cultural inferences across all four variants in that the European variants (EP and BE) seem to prefer more precise measurements like *dl* and *oz*, while the newer nations (Brazil and U.S.) tend to use “looser” measurements like *spoons* and *cups*.

We hope to have shown that cooking recipes constitute a genre *per se*, with its own technical vocabulary, syntax and textual features thus requiring a translator with specialized knowledge in the field. Besides, the striking differences between the Portuguese variants certainly justify a specific translation for each variant.

A closer analysis of all keywords, their collocations and contexts will no doubt reveal other significant differences. But this must be left for another paper.

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