

# ***WILL/WOULD YOU SHUT UP, MAN?***

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**The translation of forms of address in  
the Portuguese press.**

PRAGMATICS OF TRANSLATION

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# Forms of address in European Portuguese (EP): *Are you ok?*

<i>Are you ok?</i>			
PRAGMATIC FUNCTION → SUBJECT FORMS ↓	+ familiarity/T -social distance	- familiarity +social distance/N	- familiarity + social distance +politeness/V
<b>PRONOUN</b>	<i>Tu estás</i> 2SG <i>bem?</i> <i>Vocês estão</i> 3PL <i>bem?</i>	<i>Você está</i> 3SG <i>bem?</i> <i>Vocês estão</i> 3PL <i>bem?</i> > <i>Vossa Mercê</i>	<i>Você está</i> 3SG <i>bem?</i> <i>Vocês estão</i> 3PL <i>bem?</i> ???
<b>VERB (pro- drop)</b>	<i>Estás</i> 2SG <i>bem?</i> <i>Estão</i> 3PL <i>bem?</i>	<i>Está</i> 3SG. <i>bem?</i> <i>Estão</i> 3PL. <i>bem?</i>	
<b>NOUN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(Voc. + 2p.)</li> <li>Endear.:</li> </ul> <b><i>A minha querida está</i></b> 3SG. <i>bem?</i> [Is my darling ok?]	<i>O senhor/a senhora</i> <i>A senhora está</i> 3SG. <i>bem?</i> [Is the lady ok?] <b>FN:</b> <i>A Ana está bem?</i> [Is Ana ok?] <b>LN:</b> <i>O Silva está bem?</i> [Is Silva ok?] [+m]	<b>NOMINAL FORMS</b> <b>Title:</b> <b><i>A Doutora está</i></b> 3SG <i>bem?</i> [Is the Doctor ok?] <b>Hon+Title+FN+LN</b> <b><i>A Senhora Doutora</i></b> <b><i>Ana Silva está bem?</i></b> [Is the Lady Doctor Ana Silva ok?]

## Forms of address (FAs) in EP – what we know so far:

- 3rd person “invasion”
- VOCÊ: *Vossa Mercê* > *vossancê/ vossemecê* > *você*  
(impoliteness tones)
- 3rd person with the meaning of social distance is a conventional implicature:
  - T/V pronouns are conventional implicatures (Levinson 1983)
  - Non-cancellable (does not depend on inferences on the nature of context)
  - Detachable (depends on the particular linguist form used – 3rd p.)
  - Calculated (3rd person is more polite than *tu* without any calculation required)
  - 3rd person as address does not generate radically different interpretations as to its meaning.
- Politeness in FAs: nominal forms are the most likely V candidate; discursive struggle (Watts 2003) surrounding *você* blocks conventional implicatures with a meaning of politeness.

# Forms of address (FAs) in EP – what we know so far: complexity of address

**T:** *tu*; 2SG

**N (zero-degree** - Cook 1997, 2013, 2019): *você* (advertising)? 3SG?

**V:** nominal forms

**Negotiation and performativity** (Carreira 2001, 2003; Gouveia 2008, 2017; Oliveira 2009, 2013) – the case of *você*

**Discernment/*wakimae***: the choice of linguistic **form** or expression in which the distinction between the **ranks or role of the speaker, the referent and the addressee** are **systematically encoded**. (Ide 1989: 230)

**Deference:** "... a giving of **personal value** to the hearer, **the giving of status (...)**." (Fraser & Nolen 1981) – forms of address in EP.

## Research objectives + data and methodology:

“Expressions can be semanticised for (im)politeness effects to varying degrees” (Culpeper 2011:125) - SEMANTICISATION, CONVENTIONALISATION, SEDIMENTATION (Butler 1990 cited in Sidiropoulou 2018)

See if forms of address constitute recurrent patterns that people draw on to convey the sentiment of going “against the norms” /moral order (impoliteness/aggression). TO DO THIS – METHODOLOGY:

→ examine how FAs in a context of impoliteness are translated in the press (“... in the field of news translation (...) the target needs take precedence and **acculturation** becomes the dominant strategy.” (Bassnet 2005) ) - *Would you shut up, man?* Look at:

- Syntax (polar question y/n)
- Modality (modal verb *would/will*, verb mood)
- Pragmatic form (conventionally indirect/direct request)
- Forms of address

→ qualitative examination of first-order evaluations of these translations and assessments of their im/politeness (questionnaire)

## AGGRESSION/IMPOLITENESS in EP (after Archer 2008):

**Impoliteness:** face aggravation is sanctioned + part of activity type (e.g., presidential debates)

**Verbal aggression:** [**Agressivo/agressiva** (ADJ.): 3x in PT media (not “impolite” - **indelicado/descortês**)

face aggravation is: not “sanctioned”; an intentional aggression; transgresses the norms of acceptability; **primary goal is to harm, spite.** “... fine-grained distinctions between the English terms might turn out to be of hardly any analytical use when looking at other languages.” – Locher (2012: 50)

# *Will/Would you shut up, man?*

FORM	FUNCTION
Polar question (y/n)	Conventionally indirect directive act (request): “a speaker is faced with opposing tensions: the desire to give H an ‘out’ by being indirect, and the desire to go on record.” (B&L 1987:132)
Modal verb <i>will/would</i>	<p>“The speaker (...) wants to convey that he is unsure whether H can do A, and so he questions it.” (B&amp;L 1987:136)</p> <p><i>Will</i>: can combine volition + prediction (epistemic) (Quirk et al. 1985:219)</p> <p><i>Would</i>: tentative volition in polite requests (Quirk et al. 1985:233)</p>
<b>Subject</b> <i>you</i> + vocative <i>man</i>	<b>Social deictic: form of address</b> (in EP: pron OR NF OR null subject+verb) – is there a stable choice of address with a coherent meaning of <b>aggression</b> ?
<p>“Traditional politeness moves can be used to insult or challenge a political person.” (Tracy 2017:244)</p>	

## *Will/Would you shut up, man?* Translations:

TRANSLATION/BACK TRANSLATION:	News websites:
<p><i>Cala-te homem.</i>  <i>Cala</i> IMPERATIVE –<i>te</i> PRON. COMPL. 2SG , <i>homem</i>. VOC..            [Shut up, man.]</p>	RÁDIO RENASCENÇA
<p><i>Vais-te calar, homem?</i>  <i>Vais</i> SUBJ. (NULL) 2SG. PRES. IND. –<i>te</i> PRON. COMPL. 2SG  <i>calar, homem</i> VOC.?[Are you going to shup up, man?]</p>	CM, JORNAL DE NEGÓCIOS, DN, RTP NOTÍCIAS, SÁBADO, SAPO, SIC-NOTÍCIAS, VISÃO
<p><i>Porque não te calas, homem?</i>  <i>Porque não te</i> PRON. COMPL. 2SG <i>calas</i> PRES. IND. 2SG.,  <i>homem</i> VOC.?[Why don't you shut up, man?]</p>	TSF
<p><i>Podes calar-te, homem?</i>  <i>Podes</i> SUBJ. (NULL) 2SG. PRES. IND. <i>calar-te</i> PRON. COMPL.            2SG, <i>homem</i> VOC.?[Can you shut up, man?]</p>	EXPRESSO
<p><i>Oh homem, mas tu calas-te?</i>  <i>Oh homem</i> VOC., <i>mas tu</i> SUB. PRON. 2SG. <i>calas</i> PRES. IND. –<i>te</i>            PRON. COMPL. 2SG? [Man, but will you shut up?]</p>	JORNAL DE NOTÍCIAS

## *Will/Would you shut up, man?* Translations:

TRANSLATION/BACK TRANSLATION:	News websites:
<p><i>Pode calar-se, homem?</i>  <i>Pode</i> SUBJ. (NULL) PRES. IND. 3SG. <i>calar-se</i> PRON. COMPL. 3SG, <i>homem</i> VOC.? [Can you shut up, man?]</p>	OBSERVADOR
<p><i>Importa-se de se calar, homem?</i>  <i>Importa-</i> SUBJ. (NULL) 3SG. PRES. IND. <i>se</i> PRON. COMPL. 3SG <i>de se</i> PRON. COMPL. 3SG <i>calar, homem</i> VOC.? [Do you mind shutting up, man?]</p>	PÚBLICO
<p><i>Peço o favor de se calar.</i>  <i>Peço</i> SUBJ. (NULL) 1SG. PRES. IND. <i>o favor de se</i> PRON. COMPL. 3SG <i>calar.</i> [I ask for the favour of you shutting up.]</p>	
<p><i>Faça o favor de se calar.</i>  <i>Faça</i> SUBJ. (NULL) 3SG. SUBJ. <i>o favor de se</i> PRON. COMPL. 3SG <i>calar.</i> [Do (me) the favour of shutting up.]</p>	SOL

## *Will/Would you shut up, man?* Translations.

### Observations:

#### Acculturation/translation of impoliteness:

- Conventionally indirect requests + modality + **address (choice of 2 p.sg. to counter the conventional-implicature meaning of 3rd p. sg.)**
- stable, recurrent connection of 2 p.sg. to impoliteness/aggression
- That is: “**co-occurrence of particular types of context and particular linguistic expressions as the unchallenged realisations of particular acts** that create the perception of politeness” (Terkourafi 2005 cited in Culpeper 2010).

## *Will/Would you shut up, man?* Translations.

### Observations:

#### **Address shifts:**

*Vais* SUBJ. (NULL) 2SG. *-te* PRON. COMPL. 2SG *calar, homem* VOC.?  
[Are you going to shup up, man?]

"*Você* SUBJ. PRON. *é* 3SG PRES. IND. *o pior presidente que os Estados Unidos já tiveram*", disse Biden, noutro momento. – *Sapo*

['You are the worst president the United States have ever had,' said Biden, later.]

#### **Metacomments:**

Joe Biden não respondeu à pergunta, mas mandou Donald Trump calar-se. "Will you shut up, man?", disse. **Traduzível para** "pode calar-se, homem?" – *Observador*

[Joe Biden didn't answer the question but told Donald Trump to shut up. "Will you shut up, man?", he said. **Translatable** as "can you [3SG] shut up, man?". ]

# First-order evaluations – questionnaire:

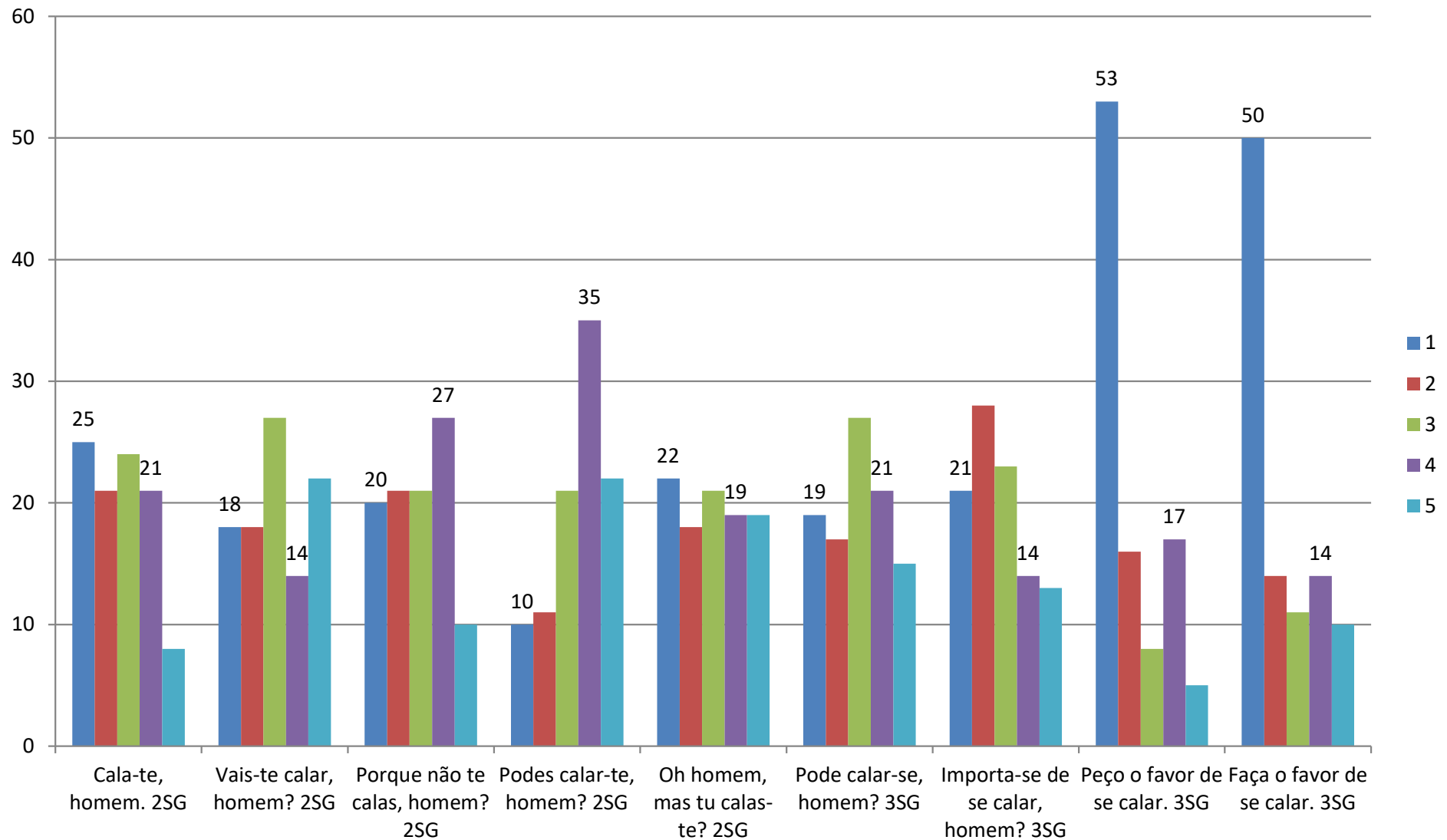
- Google Forms, 99 respondents, EP speakers
- Teachers and students from Catholic University of Portugal – Lisbon, University of Lisbon, University of Minho, Nova University Lisbon.
- INTRODUCTION: On September 29, 2020, US presidential candidates Joe Biden and Donald Trump had their first campaign debate. Having been interrupted by Donald Trump, Joe Biden tells him "would you shut up, man?" The Portuguese media translated this sentence in a number of ways. This questionnaire is to gather opinions about these translations. You will be asked to rate 9 sentences on a scale of 1 to 5, which should take no longer than 3-4 minutes. Thank you very much for your invaluable participation.

**1. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you assess the following translations (1 = very bad translation; 5 = very good translation)?**

**2. On a scale of 1 to 5, how polite do you think the previous sentences are (1 = very impolite; 5 = very polite).**

**3. You have finished the questionnaire. Please use the space below if you wish to leave a comment. Thank you very much again for your participation.**

# 1. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you assess the following translations (1 = very bad translation; 5 = very good translation)?



# Comments:

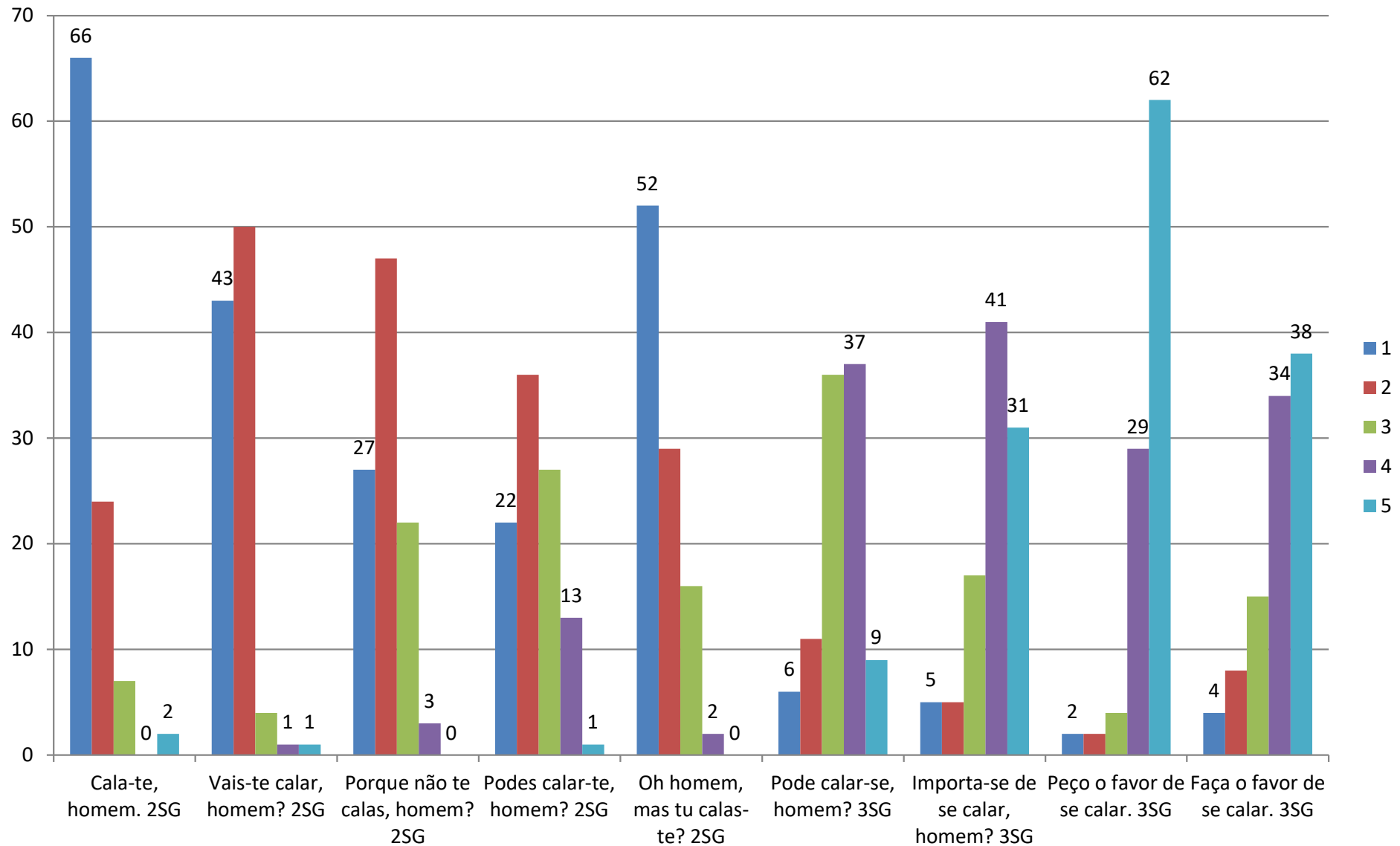
*Traduziria por "És 2SG capaz de calar a boca, pá?"*

I would translate it as "Are you able to shut your mouth, man?" [Can you shut your mouth, *man*?]

*Outras possibilidades: "Oh pá, estavas 2SG melhor caladinho DIM. ." ou "Mas tu nunca te calas 2SG, homem?"*

Other possibilities: "Look, *man*, you'd do better to be **quiet**" or "But do you ever shut up, man?"

## 2. On a scale of 1 to 5, how polite do you think the previous sentences are (1 = very impolite; 5 = very polite).



# Comments:

*Acredito que Joe Biden tenha sido propositadamente **indelicado**, tendo em conta o contexto.*

[I think Joe Biden might have been impolite on purpose, given the context.]

# Conclusions:

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS:

- Develop a set of analytical tools/concepts applicable to particular languages (EP) + base these analytical tools/concepts on first-order evaluations
- Choose “working definitions, which will differ depending on the purposes in an individual project” (Janicki, 2017: 164). For example – discursive view of im/politeness in EP? **Study the *a priori* notions and evaluations that speakers hold of im/politeness** and how they perceive it is translated in linguistic choices
- be aware of the ideological load of the data (Mills 2009, 2017):
  - Journalists/translators/mediators (standard-Portuguese speakers catering for a particular audience; e.g. *Público: Importa-se 3SG. de se 3SG calar, homem?* [Do you mind shutting up, man?])
  - Informants – academia

## Specific conclusions:

- Importance of news translation to access **emic evaluations** given the propensity to acculturation (“the translator’s role has an emic aspect to it” - Sidiropoulou 2018 – Fairclough 1995)
- Forms of address in news translations are used as (conversational?generalised?) **implicatures** of aggression/impoliteness – cfr. address shift + robust first-order assessment of which address patterns + forms are im/polite
- What is the nature of these implicatures (not entirely unpredictable)? How stable are they? How do aspects of **social class**, **culture**, social change, interfere?
- MORE WORK NEEDED – FAs and discernment encode the cultural values of a society preoccupied with correct attribution of rank+fixed forms → see the positive evaluations of politeness attributed to **INDIRECTNESS** (conventionally indirect requests with elaboration of form) + **SOCIAL DISTANCE (3SG + effacement of addressee)**;
- **Translation of press items** and its respective “folk” evaluations indicate that choice of FAs+concern for FORM in EP shape interpersonal relationships based on:  
DISCERNEMENT, DEFERENCE **and/or** CREATIVITY, NEGOTIATION,  
PERFORMATIVITY of social roles

**THANK YOU!**