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Loss of the diminutive in Pomeranian in Brazil

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Pomeranian is the Low Saxon dialect formerly spoken in Hinter-Pommern between Oder and Vistula Rivers in present-day Poland. It is not spoken in cohesive community in Europe anymore after 1945, but it is in very good shape in Brazil from the emigration wave of 1850-1880 (around 200.000 speakers according to the lowest estimations). While the language is obviously Pomeranian from the Kolberg region, the language underwent some changes in Brazil. We will describe some of these changes. For instance, European Pomeranian had a productive synthetic diminutive (Mahnke 1931), but Pomeranian in Brazil lost this morphological category completely and produces "diminutives" only synthetically by using *klai(n)* 'little', quite parallel to English (and Mainland Scandinavian). Though most Pomeranians in Brazil are bilingual, we think that language contact is an improbable cause of this change, for the dominant language Portuguese is famous for its productive morphological diminutive. Instead, we explore a morphosyntactic structural cause for this loss, which make Pomeranian similar to English and Mainland Scandinavian (and to the Oldenburger Platt).

Studierende und andere Interessierte sind herzlich eingeladen!

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