



INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE BRAGANÇA  
Escola Superior de Educação

*From one language to another*

*De un idioma a otro*

*D'une langue à l'autre*

*De uma língua a outra*

*Von einer Sprache in die andere*

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**OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES:**

**FROM ONE LANGUAGE TO ANOTHER**

**December 3 - 5 2015**



Bragança

<mailto:coloquiointernacionalle@gmail.com>

**Departamento de Línguas Estrangeiras**



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**Livro de Resumos**

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## **George Orwell's "Politics and the English Language".**

### **Euphemisms and metaphors in post-war Britain**

*Languages, memory and identity*

Language and political are two inextricable concepts for George Orwell, who, writing during and after 2nd World War Britain, criticizes the vagueness and the excessive use of phraseology and ambiguity in political language. According to the author: "In our own time, political speech and writing are largely the defence of the indefensible (...). Thus political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness." (Orwell, 2000: 356).\*

In a decaying time where the general political atmosphere was therefore bad, the language was also unscrupulous as it suffered from the schizophrenia, vagueness, metaphorical style and lies that defined politics in post-war Britain.

An opponent of inkhorn terms, Orwell loathed the use of the hundreds of foreign words and phrases current in English and believed that the English language, or as he highlights, "Saxon words", would cover the needs of political writers instead of Latin or Greek or/and other loans.

In this paper, we shall analyse Orwell's 1946 essay "Politics and the English language" from both linguistic and cultural insights, focusing on the English political status quo at the time, as well as highlighting Orwell's idea of language concreteness.

\*Orwell, George (2000). *George Orwell's Essays*. London: Penguin Books in association with Martin Secker & Warburg.